VALLEY VOICE

Volume XXXIV No. 8 • 17 April, 2014 www.ourvalleyvoice.com 208 W. Main St., Ste. E • Visalia, CA

Artist's rendering of the new Animal Control Facility in Visalia.

Visalia's New Animal Control Facility to Break Ground in May

CATHERINE DOE

To the relief of the Visalia City Council, and Visalia's animal lovers, a contract has finally been approved to build the new Animal Control Facility. During their April 7th meeting, the Visalia City Council voted 5-0 to accept Forcum/Mackey Construction, Inc.'s unexpectedly low bid of $4,550,000. According to the *Visalia Times-Delta*, Mayor Steve Nelsen said, "We're doing cartwheels because our earlier estimates said it would cost us $5 million to $5.5 million." Groundbreaking will be in May and the firm has twelve months to complete the project. The city council started working on the new Animal Control Facility (ACF) back in 2006. The new facility will have twice as many kennels and house approximately 9,000 animals a year. The number of animals will actually decrease because Visalia Animal Control will only be handling animals from Visalia and Dinuba, not Exeter and Tulare as they had been doing in years past.

Although nine firms submitted bids, some from outside the Central Valley, Forcum/Mackey, from Ivanhoe, submitted the lowest bid that covered all the construction requirements. The project is being financed primarily from a 15-year, $6.6 million loan from Citizens Business Bank via Municipal Finance Corporation. The loan is being repaid by the General Fund in annual installments. The Visalia Animal Care Facility will be 17,000 square feet on approximately 3.9 acres.

This project is being constructed to meet the animal care needs of the city and provide an improved level of public safety. The ACF will be a "state-of-the-art" facility focusing on not only efficient operational management and maintenance, but all facets of health and welfare of animals through both traditional animal control, and the services provided by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). The total amount of money appropriated to this project is $7,350,000. Besides the construction of the facility the design costs so far have been approximately $700,000. The current Animal Control Facility is located by the Visalia Municipal Airport off of Highway 99. According to Mario Cifuentez, head coordinator of the project for the city, "The new building is being built immediately adjacent to the north. Once the new facility is completed, two of the existing kennels will be retained for overflow and the remainder of the existing facility will be demolished." The old facility, built in 1968, houses both Animal Control & Animal Shelter staff. The building is able to hold 115 dogs and 200 cats at one time, and is the major holding facility for lost or stray pets in Visalia and other surrounding cities.

The City of Visalia contracts its services for sheltering and animal control to Valley Oak SPCA. Their goal is to insure public health, safety and animal welfare in our community.

Help Save Visalia's Water Now

STEVE NELSEN

Visalians, it's time to adopt a new habit. One of our most important resources is in trouble, and we need to do everything we can to protect it today and into the future.

Steve Nelsen

Governor Brown declared a statewide drought emergency in response to our third drought year, and calls upon all citizens to reduce their water usage by 20%. The average depth to the groundwater beneath Visalia is at an historical low. If the current pace of pumping water continues, eventually there will be insufficient water to sustain our needs.

On March 17, the City Council adopted a water conservation ordinance and implemented Stage 4 - Water Emergency, which takes effect today, April 17. Stage 4 allows watering one day a week March-April and November-December, two days a week in May and October, and three days a week June-September. No watering will be allowed in January and February. In total, the changes will bring an estimated 25% annual reduction in landscape irrigation, which is responsible for about

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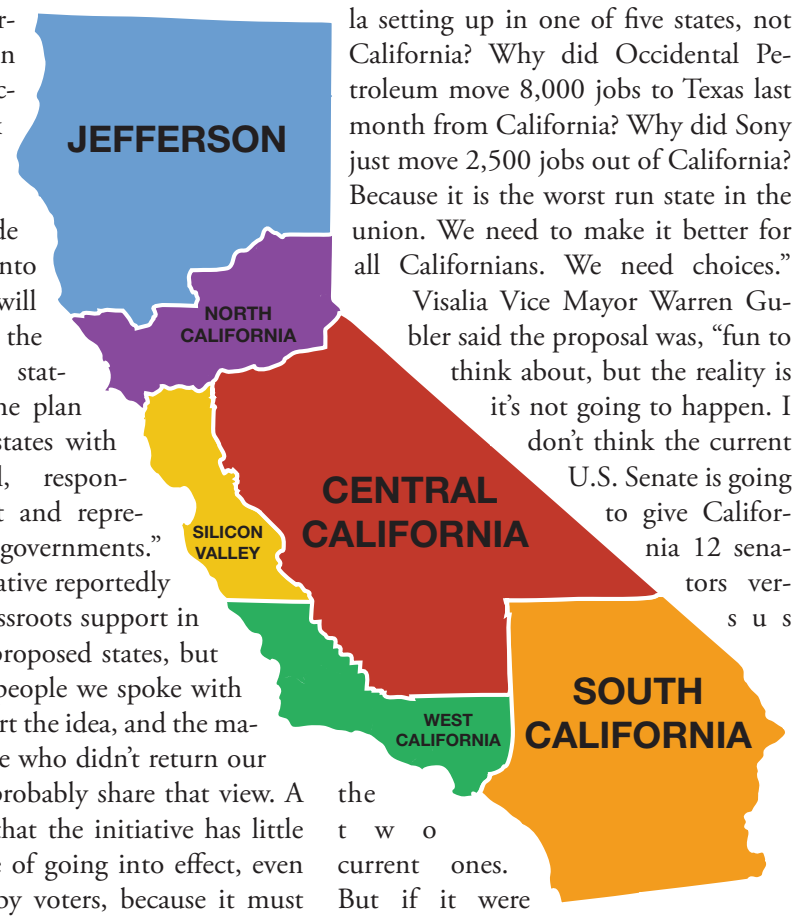
'Six Californias' Initiative Inspires Local Concern, Optimism… and Some Scoffing

STEVE PASTIS



If the current petition drive is successful, "Six Californias," an initiative to divide California into six states, will soon be on the ballot. The stated goal of the plan is to create states with "more local, responsive, efficient and representative governments."

The initiative reportedly has some grassroots support in each of the proposed states, but most of the people we spoke with do not support the idea, and the majority of those who didn't return our phone calls probably share that view. A few told us that the initiative has little or no chance of going into effect, even if approved by voters, because it must also be approved by legislatures in both Sacramento and Washington, D.C.

If the measure passes – and is put into effect – it will benefit people in Tulare County, according to Tim Draper, the Bay Area entrepreneur and investor spearheading the initiative.

"Tulare County will benefit from being closer to their government," Draper told the Voice. "Their state government will be more representative to the needs of the people in Tulare County. If Tulare County doesn't want to stay in the current state, if the initiative passes, they can move to another state.

"Since California is the worst managed state in the U.S., and the worst place to do business, and is 46th in K-12 education, it is likely that even if your new state is just average, then you will be way better off, but I believe it will be much better than that," he continued. "For example, your state could give incentives for manufacturers, and Californians would not lose all the jobs we are losing to other states. Why is Tesla setting up in one of five states, not California? Why did Occidental Petroleum move 8,000 jobs to Texas last month from California? Why did Sony just move 2,500 jobs out of California? Because it is the worst run state in the union. We need to make it better for all Californians. We need choices."

Visalia Vice Mayor Warren Gubler said the proposal was, "fun to think about, but the reality is it's not going to happen. I don't think the current U.S. Senate is going to give California 12 senators versus the two current ones. But if it were to happen – and I'm skeptical – I think politically we'd be a more conservative state so it would be more cohesive, and I think Visalia would have more influence."

Lindsay Mann, CEO of the Kaweah Delta Health Care District, wanted to make it clear he considered the idea "a longshot" and that he was responding to questions as "an academic exercise."

He explained that if there were a Central California state, local hospitals would not be burdened with the same seismic retrofitting standards that are in place in Los Angeles and the Bay Area, which have a much more serious threat of major earthquakes.

"As it stands now in the Central Valley, we have exactly the same safety seismic standards," he said. "There is 'one-size-fits-all' legislation on seismic safety."

Mann also noted that the area relies more heavily on Medicaid and Medicare than other areas of the state, and would

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Farmersville Business Owners Plan to Create or Revive City's Chamber of Commerce

STEVE PASTIS

Members of Farmersville's business community plan to either create or revive a chamber of commerce in the city. Their next move depends on what members of the board of directors of the Farmersville Chamber of Commerce, which ceased operation in 2011, decide to do.

"The simple path is working with the past board," said Raymond Macareno, a consultant with the Tulare/Kings Hispanic Chamber, who is also involved in this effort. "We asked if they wanted to stay on the board. From the feedback I got, they didn't seem interested."

Even so, the new group is waiting for their response.

"We have to be respectful that they are the board of directors," explained Macareno. "If it happens to be that they don't respond, we will start our own chamber. If they don't come to a conclusion, we'll start our own chamber."

In addition to an existing bank account and articles of incorporation, the most recent Farmersville Chamber had an office in a city-owned building on Front Street, which was leased for what Macareno called "a very small fee." He said the new chamber plans to

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

Let Me Tell You How It Will Be

The two inescapable things in life, it is frequently asserted, are death and taxes. Sometimes I'm uncertain as to which I'd prefer, given a choice, and sometimes they seem like the same thing. But they're not. And the surest way to discern between the two is that, if you have done well enough in life, there is such a thing as an estate tax. When you close your eyes forever, those of the Taxman remain watchful.

Let's be clear: we're talking Tax with a capital T. Not the many irritating minor levies we each face on a daily basis--because, depending upon where you live and what you purchase, taxes are different--but that which is exacted by Washington. Namely, the Federal Income Tax. Most of us grapple with this vicariously, through an accountant, or personally--if you're brave enough. I say "most of us" because the threshold income, if you're single and under 65, is $10,000 annually. If you fit that demographic then, and you earn more than $833 per month, you will be making a check out to the United States Treasury. You'll likely qualify for a refund--but why go through this charade at all? The tax threshold should be higher. Even here in the Valley you'd be hard-pressed to pay your rent and utilities--let alone eat--on $833 each month. In San Francisco, say, your situation would be positively Dickensian.

Where's George Harrison when you need him?

We first got into this mess early in the Civil War, in 1862, when an income tax was established to bolster the coffers of the Union's war effort. Perhaps to help with Reconstruction, it lasted until 1872. Briefly revived in 1894, the Federal Income Tax was declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court a year later. In 1913, finally, on the eve of the First World War, the 16th Amendment made the Tax we know today a permanent fixture. Or affliction.

There floats about our country, in some circles, the notion that paying your Tax is, somehow, a patriotic action. I wonder if that isn't because the permanent implementation of our Federal Income Tax was in preparation for wartime to come. Although it had not yet arrived, the First World War could safely say to have been anticipated so early as the First Moroccan Crisis of 1905. Death and Taxes, indeed.

I say the Tax is theft. Sure, it could be much worse, as in Europe, for instance, where you'll find eight of the world's top ten Tax rates. But the citizenry of those countries gets--has paid for--something in return: single-payer healthcare, university tuition for those who qualify academically, and a whole bevy of things I'm sure don't even occur to the average American.

We get the biggest military in the world.

Let me tell you how it will be. You'll pay your Tax, vote, sit on a jury, perhaps, volunteer occasionally, participate in school events--and still there will be a struggle over bad roads and bridges to contend with a job that just may allow you to pay all your bills. Is this any way to live? And now corporations are "people." Something tells me they don't wrestle with the same dilemmas the average Joe does. Something tells me they don't wrestle with Tax the same way an individual--or even a family--does. Gone are the days when rent was a manageable fraction of personal income; departed, too, is the time when tuition was not astronomical. How many otherwise middle-class families are forced to have their children assume student loans? Of course, this debt is foisted onto the next generation. I'm 51 years old, and there are peers of mine yet saddled with these payments. Some of them have children now approaching university age themselves. There currently is no Tax respite that adequately breaks this vicious cycle. And while income inequality in our country is only worsening, corporations are doing especially well.

It is true that ours is a "progressive" Tax system, wherein the wealthiest of us shoulder the greatest burden. It's also true that nearly half of us, after refunds and credits, pay next to no Tax at all. But who among us comprehends the truly arcane mechanisms that make up the clockwork of it all? And why should we have to pay someone to tell us how much we have to pay someone else? Can someone tell me our entire Tax system is not seriously askew?

Some propose a flat Federal Income Tax, a small percentage that everybody must pay. The assumption of fairness here is that, while the wealthy would still write the larger checks, all Americans would contribute something. Proponents of the complete elimination of Income Tax argue that our country's financial needs could be met by leveling a roughly 15% national sales tax on, literally, everything. I don't have any solutions, myself. And though there is much debate about the precision of the figures, little doubt remains that the status quo is woefully insufficient. Woefully inefficient, too.

But here's why the Tax is theft. You've heard of the howl raised by our forefathers over their lack of a presence in London: "No taxation without representation." Well, we're represented in Washington, alright--but there's a disconnect with our Tax. Come 15 April, I'd much prefer to check a box for "Healthcare," "Education," or "Infrastructure" rather than the munitions I'll probably purchase.

— Joseph Oldenbourg

THE VALLEY VOICE IS YOUR NEWSPAPER

Published by The Valley Voice, LLC.

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POLITICAL FIX

CATHERINE DOE

RUBEN MACARENO RACKS UP MORE ENDORSEMENTS FOR THE 26TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT RACE

Ruben Macareno is the leading Democrat in terms of endorsements for the 26th Assembly District Race. California Insurance Commissioner Dave Jones has just endorsed Mr. Macareno for the 26th State Assembly seat, which is being vacated by Assembly Member Connie Conway.

"I am honored to have the endorsement of a statewide office-holder in Dave Jones, who works tirelessly for Californians," said Mr. Macareno. "We share a common value of working hard for constituents and are dedicated to public service."

Mr. Jones leads the California Department of Insurance (CDI), the largest consumer protection agency in the state, which regulates the $123 billion insurance industry. He served in the Assembly from 2004 to 2010.

Mr. Macareno also secured the endorsement of the Latino Democrats of Tulare County (LDTC). On the heels of that endorsement, Mr. Macareno also got a nod from Carlos Alcala, the chairman of the California Democratic Party Chicano Latino Caucus. Mr. Alcala is also the communications director for San Francisco Assembly Member Tom Ammiano.

"I am elated that Latino leaders are standing with me in this endeavor. Latino issues are no different than the needs and concerns of the entire district. Everyone, no matter what party affiliation or background, wants more jobs, drinkable water, water for farmers, education, healthcare, public safety, economic development and more," said Mr. Macareno. Latinos make up 60% of the district's general population. Of the seven candidates running for the State Assembly, Mr. Macareno is the only Latino Democrat.

COUNCIL MEMBER ROSAENA SANCHEZ ENDORSES KAELBLE FOR DISTRICT ATTORNEY

Lindsay City Council Member Rosaena Sanchez has announced her endorsement of Ralph F. Kaelble for Tulare County District Attorney. This is another key endorsement for Mr. Kaelble, who served as a Tulare County prosecutor for nearly 14 years and has been widely endorsed.

Mr. Kaelble has also been endorsed by six local law enforcement officer associations, including the Tulare County Deputy Sheriff's Association, the Tulare County Probation Association, as well as the Police Officer Associations of the Visalia, Lindsay, Dinuba and Exeter Police Departments, Visalia City Mayor Steve Nelsen, the Tule River Tribal Council, and El Centro Mexicano American Latinos.

On April 23rd from 5:30-8:30pm, Troy and Janette Korsgaden are hosting a reception to support the election of Mr. Kaelble. This event will be held at the private residence at Crawdaddys Restaurant, located at 333 East Main Street in Visalia. Tickets are $125 per person and can be purchased online at www.RFKforDA.com or by calling Kathy Looper at (559) 303-3029. All funds raised during this event will directly benefit the Ralph F. Kaelble for Tulare County District Attorney 2014 campaign.

TIM WARD RECEIVES ENDORSEMENT FROM BILL WITTMAN

Former Tulare County Sheriff Bill Wittman recently endorsed Tim Ward for Tulare County District Attorney. Mr. Ward is the acting appointed District Attorney. Mr. Wittman said in his endorsement letter that, "for years, Tim Ward has worked closely with the Sheriff's Office in our efforts to protect the public we serve. Since assuming the office of District Attorney, Tim's efforts have been even more impressive. As District Attorney, Tim has been completely dedicated to making the Rural Crime Program a success in protecting the farmers and ranchers of our county from the thieves who victimize them and endanger their farming operations. Tim Ward has proven himself to be tough on crime. He ably leads a great staff of prosecutors and investigators who work hand in hand with our outstanding Sheriffs department in holding criminals accountable for their crimes. I have every confidence in Tim's ability to continue his excellent work as District Attorney."

A DIFFERENT FORMAT FOR CHAMBER OF COMMERCE CANDIDATES' FORUM

On Wednesday, April 8th the Visalia Chamber of Commerce held a candidates' forum at 7:00am. Fortunately, for democracy, there were eleven candidates, all of whom showed. Unfortunately, for the chamber, eleven were too many to conduct a traditional forum. Eleven tables were set up where each candidate could introduce themselves to a small group of people. The attendees could then spend ten minutes with the candidates of their choice. There was only time to go to four tables, so it made sense to focus on the District Attorney's and Sheriff's race.

Former Undersheriff Dave Whaley was there with his wife, Kathleen. There wasn't enough time for even tasteful mudslinging, so no word was mentioned about the gun raffle. The main point Mr. Whaley wanted to make was that he had more experience than his competitor, not just in years, but in position and in responsibility. Mr. Whaley spent many years as the division commander, being in charge of 700 employees, an $80 million budget and four jails. While at the table of acting Sheriff Mike Boudreaux, Mr. Boudreaux stated that he was the sheriff of the future, pointing out that Mr. Whaley had been retired for five years. When technology changes every 72 hours, five years is a long time to be out of the swim. Mr. Boudreaux does seem to have a technological edge, and wins for best quote so far in the campaign. "When someone breaks into your house they leave the TV and steal your identification."

While at appointed District Attorney Tim Ward's table, I mentioned that the district attorney's race is the most competitive because he and Mr. Kaelble seem so evenly matched. Mr. Ward emphatically said that "the differences between himself and Mr. Kaelble are night and day." While working at the district attorney's office, he was always promoted ahead of Mr. Kaelble. He was promoted as head prosecutor of the homicide team and then in 2007 worked with the DA in the Information Technology Department. He was appointed Assistant District Attorney in 2011. During the height of the recession, he was in charge of budget and personnel and put together a budget that did not lay anyone off. Mr. Ward said that as DA you don't grab a case and go to court. "You need to use your management skills."

Mr. Kaelble's main message was that he worked his way up from being a maintenance worker in Temple City to being a lawyer and working at the DA's office where he was employed for 14 years. He now has a private practice in Visalia on Main Street. His passion is working with juveniles. Mr. Kaelble feels that the DA shouldn't just go to the Lion's Club and Rotary to talk, but should get out into the schools.

At the end of the forum each candidate was given two minutes to state their case. Nothing much new was revealed, but if Toastmasters were giving out speaking awards they would go to Rudy Mendoza, Tim Ward and Mike Boudreaux.

TWO IS THE TOP

Remember the drama surrounding Andy Vidak and Leticia Perez's special election for State Senate District 16 (Now District 14)? During the May 2013 primary, Mr. Vidak had jumped to an early lead on election night with almost 52% of the vote. Or had he? Republicans were calling Mr. Vidak senator-elect and Ms. Perez had even conceded the race. Supposedly, he had won the election outright with at least 50% plus one vote. But at the end of the week, Mr. Vidak had fallen short of an outright win by just 115 votes. The runoff between he and Ms. Perez took place in July, when Mr. Vidak went on to an easy, though expensive, victory.

After having our civics lesson about winning 50% plus one to avoid a runoff, we need to forget we ever learned it. Unbeknownst to me, the 50% plus one rule was being used last year only because it was a special election. Supposedly, the rules are different for a special election to help the district save money, which didn't work, because it still cost the district a million dollars. The candidates themselves ended up spending $4.5 million, combined.

During a regular election there is no 50% plus one rule. The top two candidates go from the primary to the general election no matter how few or how many votes they get. So once again Mr. Vidak finds himself in another unique situation. He only has one competitor, Fresno School Board Member Luis Chavez. That means that the June primary is just a practice run and won't mean anything. It doesn't matter how many votes either of them get. Both will proceed to the general election in November.

Not so for the Tulare County District Attorney's election or the Tulare County Sheriff's election. Even though there are only two candidates in both races, their election will be over in June. Why? Because the DA and Sheriff's races are non-partisan elections. The Top Two rule only applies for partisan offices such as the state assembly, or governor when candidates run as either a Democrat or a Republican or lesser party.

Proposition 14, passed in 2012, gives candidates who were not registered in one of the two major parties a chance to win. It also means that if two Republicans get the most votes during the primary, one won't be knocked out by a Democrat who received fewer votes than either of them. Before Proposition 14, the top vote-getting candidate from each party went on to the general election, even if they came in third.

TWO STATEWIDE OFFICES MAY GO REPUBLICAN

To the Democrats' delight and the Republicans' chagrin, all of California's statewide offices are held by Democrats. That may change in November. Both the State Controller and Secretary of State have poll numbers that favor a Republican victory.

According to the recently published Field Poll, Ashley Swearengin is well ahead of her two better-known Democratic competitors with the backing of 28% of likely voters. Betty Yee, Board of Equalization member, has 19%, while Assembly Speaker John Perez has 14%. The fly in the ointment is that 38% of likely voters are undecided.

So how did a little-known mayor come in first over two seasoned candidates known throughout the state? According to the man behind the poll, Marc Di Camillo, "When you have multiple viable candidates on one side, it gives an early advantage to the other." Mr. Di Camillo also described the voting public as 75% white, 67% over 50 years old and 37% Republican, thus guaranteeing Ms. Swearengin a good showing despite the fact that she has raised less than $100,000. Mr. DiCamillo added that "Swearengin is definitely benefitting from the fact that this will be a low-turnout election." When Democrats swept the state offices two years ago, it was during a presidential election. Several of the races, such as Secretary of State, were too close to call for a week and would have never gone Democratic if it had been a midterm election.

In regard to the current Secretary

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Q&A: INTERVIEWS WITH CANDIDATES FOR STATE ASSEMBLY DISTRICT 26

Teresita Andres

STAFF REPORTS

Teresita "Tess" Andres has lived in Visalia for 12 years. Born in 1952 in Butuan City of the Philippines, at nine years old, she managed her family farm after her father's death. She earned a BA in Criminology and served in the Office of the Executive Secretary of the President of the Philippines. Now a US citizen, she is married, and she is a Kaweah Delta employee and an independent home care contractor while studying at College of the Sequoias.

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING?

My three main reasons in running for office are to utilize my experience, knowledge and skill set for the benefit of my fellow citizens, to empower District 26 in Sacramento, and to be a voice for our communities that are diverse in careers, interests and backgrounds. My role models include Mona Pasquil, former lieutenant governor, and Thani Sakauye, chief justice of California--these are strong minority women who advocate for social justice, opportunities and progress in our state. I want to give back to the community, such as by addressing concerns of farmers, veterans and students, and this is my opportunity. I will not quit until the job is done.

Teresita Andres

HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER REPUBLICANS RUNNING FOR THE 26th DISTRICT?

I am the most experienced in government and public services, locally and internationally. I have a multicultural background, so I support diversity with conservative values since positive traditions are important to cherish and continue. The languages I speak include English, Cebuano (Visaya), Tagalog and a bit of Spanish. As an active student for several years at the College of the Sequoias, I understand the needs of youth and fellow students. For example, I now have ten certificates. Achieving them involved hard work: working full-time while studying, which meant only about five hours of sleep each day. But I always passed my classes and I also served as a student ambassador, bringing the issues of students from COS to Sacramento. For the student activities I led, I received a service award. For having good grades, I was nominated to the Who's Who Among Students of American Universities and Colleges. Furthermore, I have mingled with different socioeconomic classes and, therefore, I comprehend their perspectives. One adversity I faced was the death of my father when I was nine years old. As the eldest, I took the responsibility of managing our small farm in the Philippines. I have been able to empathize with businessmen, farmers and people facing adversity. Through this experience, since an early age, I gained decision-making, time management and leadership skills, such as through dealing with tenants and workers. I grew in compassion for the people as well. I don't like wasting time, and I don't quit until the job is done.

HOW WILL YOU BE EFFECTIVE AT THE STATE LEVEL WITH A DEMOCRATIC MAJORITY?

I can get along well with any party. For instance, in my experience in the Philippines, when I worked in the Office of the Executive Secretary of the President of the Philippines, I invited everyone from the opposite fence to join the administration. Also, part of my job was to welcome foreign dignitaries visiting the Philippines to participate in historical events, such as the Asia Pacific Economic Council meeting. Because I don't quit until the job is done, I am open to collaboration to accomplish progress and complete the work. All problems cannot be solved by one person or one

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Carlton Jones

With over twenty years and counting of public service — including work with the Tulare and Fresno City Fire Departments and over six years serving on the Tulare City Council — Carlton Jones is running for State Assembly District 26. He wants to take a common sense approach for finding solutions to the state level.

WHY ARE YOU RUNNING?

In my case, it would be all about timing. My introduction to politics started back in high school. My dream was to be a fireman – and after playing collegiate sports and coming back home to Tulare, where I was born and raised and love it – I got to be a fireman, which introduced me to the city council. In 2004, I was on the council, from 2004 to 2008, and I was re-elected in 2012. With our local representative, Connie Conway, terming out at the State Assembly, I felt the experience that I have, being as a councilman, being as a public employee – I'm a hometown guy, and I see the disconnect that our area, District 26, the strained relationship that we have with the capital, and I want to repair that so we have quality representation there.

Carlton Jones

HOW CAN YOU FEEL CONFIDENT IN SUCH A STRONGLY REPUBLICAN DISTRICT?

I think at the end of the day, people just want true representation, and one of my goals is to make sure that people see that your name is bigger than your party on the ballot sheet, and that it's for a reason. The message that we have and the message we need to deliver should be bigger than the party itself. That's how I've always been as a council member, that's how I've always been as a firefighter, as a person in church, and in those different aspects of my life the party wasn't an issue. The people that I represent, and the people that believe in me, the party is not an issue.

I HEARD YOU HAVE TWO CAMPAIGN MANAGERS. HOW IS THAT WORKING?

Actually, I have three. Well, my wife is actually my life manager, and then Abigail Solis is a campaign manager and Becky Shields is my branding and marketing specialist. And they're all campaign managers. And they all give me great advice. They all believe in and stand up for what I believe in. It's interesting how my team came together and started. I met Abigail when she was working for a water company in Visalia, and as issue was raised in the water bills in Tulare, and she came and made a presentation before our city council. With water being a huge issue, I recruited her. I've never pretended to be the master at anything, but when you're seeking expert advice, when you're building a team, you definitely want to surround yourself by people who know different areas a lot better than you do. So I can learn from them, I can use them as a resource, and that's how I recruited Abigail. And then Becky Shields came highly recommended from close friends that said she is a master at marketing. You look and compare my branding, the image that she put out for me, and just the artwork

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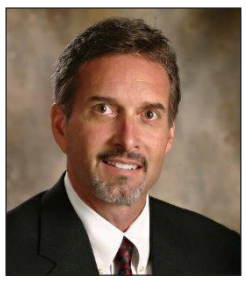

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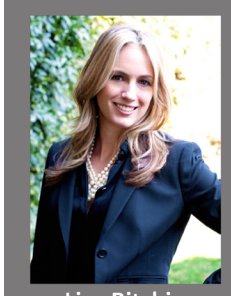

Lisa Ritchie
(559) 679-6889

Gorgeous custom home on five acres outside of Exeter. Property consists of four acres of four-year-old producing pomegranates with horse corrals. Designer-influenced home has large living room open to chef's kitchen, breakfast room and bar. Masterbedroom provides amazing views of the property and mountains. Two additional bedrooms, bathroom and laundry room complete the second story. Lisa Ritchie (559) 679-6889

DS REALTY

dsrealtyinc.com

California Food Banks Have Crucial Need for More Milk

That gallon of milk you consider a staple in your refrigerator is missing in many of California's food banks. According to Feeding America, the nation's largest domestic hunger-relief organization, milk is one of the items most requested by food bank clients, yet it is rarely donated. That will soon change with the launch of The Great American Milk Drive, the first-ever national program to help deliver highly desired and nutrient-rich gallons of milk to hungry families who need it most.

Hunger impacts one in six Americans, including 12.5 million families who do not have access to adequate nourishment to help them reach their full potential. The facts are even more alarming locally with one in four Californians suffering from poverty, the highest rate in any state. Over 6.5 million California residents experience food insecurity and due to the perishable nature of foods like milk, Feeding America food bank clients receive, on average, only one gallon of milk per person per year and obtain less than the suggested servings of milk to fulfill a well-balanced diet. To help combat this, Feeding America has teamed up with the dairy industry, including the California Milk Processor Board (CMPB), the creator of "got milk?," to launch The Great American Milk Drive and alleviate hunger in local communities.

"Food insecurity is a big problem throughout the United States, including for millions of Californians who struggle to get the nutrition they need," said Bob Aiken, CEO of Feeding America.

With a simple click of a mouse (at www.gotmilk.com) or a text message (text "Milk" to 27722), it is now possible to buy much-needed milk and donate it to a family who does not have regular access to it. By entering your zip code, you can ensure the donation stays in your community. Funds will be converted into vouchers that go to local food banks and into the hands of families in need. The vouchers can be redeemed at local grocery stores, eliminating any food pantry space or refrigeration obstacles.

All 43 Feeding America food banks in California will participate, along with their distribution partners, including Foodlink for Tulare County and Kings Community Action Organization.

"No one should have to suffer from hunger or lack basic staples like milk," said Steve James, executive director of the CMPB.

Feeding America is a nationwide network that provides food to more than 37 million people through 61,000 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters in communities across America. Feeding America also supports programs that improve food security among the people it serves, educates the public about the problem of hunger, and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. For more information, visit www.feedingamerica.org.

To find out how you can help your local community or to learn more about the Great American Milk Drive, visit www.gotmilk.com.

The Victims' Memorial Quilt, comprised of individual quilt squares created by family members.

National Crime Victims' Rights Week Marked Locally with Quilt Unveiling

In honor of our county's crime victims whose lives have been lost due to violence, the Office of the District Attorney, County of Tulare, hosted its 14th Annual Victims' Memorial Quilt Unveiling. The event took place at the Visalia Holiday Inn on April 11, during National Crime Victims' Rights Week.

The Victims' Memorial Quilt was created with individual quilt squares sewn together, each having been created by a family member or loved one, honoring a victim who was lost by criminal violence. The quilt serves to convey a symbol of comfort, bringing together families who have experienced similar sorrow. This ceremony includes testimonials, live music and words of compassion from public officials.

"We hope that this memorial can bring together family and friends of those lost for an opportunity to share and grieve, and to reflect on their loved one," said District Attorney Tim Ward. "It's a chance for us as a community to recognize their loss and pain. We want them to know they are not alone. Victims and their families are entitled to be treated with dignity, compassion and respect."

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Odd	None	None	Sat	Sat	Tue Sat	Tue Thu Sat	Tue Thu Sat	Tue Thu Sat	Tue Thu Sat	Tue Sat	Sat	Sat
Even	None	None	Sun	Sun	Wed Sun	Wed Fri Sun	Wed Fri Sun	Wed Fri Sun	Wed Fri Sun	Wed Sun	Sun	Sun

Odd = Addresses ending in an odd number (1, 3, 5, 7, 9) Even = Addresses ending in an even number (0, 2, 4, 6, 8)

Water

Continued from p. 1

60% of the total water usage in the City.

During months when one watering day a week is allowed, odd-numbered addresses will water on Saturdays, even-numbered on Sundays. During months when two days a week are allowed, odd-numbered addresses will water on Tuesdays and Saturdays, even-numbered on Wednesdays and Sundays. During the summer months, when three days a week are allowed, odd -numbered addresses will water on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, and even-numbered on Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays. The City and its residents have assertively responded to calls for water conservation, dating back to 1991, when mandatory water restrictions were put in place. Visalia has had an active groundwater recharge program since 2005, and is investing $140 million to upgrade the Water Conservation Plant to turn its wastewater into high-quality recycled water. The City has planted low-water-use plants and turf in its parks and landscapes and installed smart irrigation controllers.

There are steps all of us can take today to conserve our most precious resource on a long-term basis. Residents and businesses are urged to check their irrigation systems to make sure they don't have any leaks. Adjust any misaligned sprinklers to prevent overwatering. Reduce the size of your lawn by making beds bigger and plant low-water-use plants. Mulch beds to help keep moisture in the soil and plant roots cooler in the summer. Replace older toilets or clothes washers with new high-efficiency models.

The City will conduct a citywide outreach effort utilizing the media, public presentations, targeted mailings, special events, as well as demonstration gardens in the four quadrants of the City that provide information on recommended low water use plants and landscapes. We also will work with our partners at the State in its "Save Our Water" campaign with informational flyers, brochures, and social media messaging to provide information you can use to maintain your landscape once the new ordinance is in place. For information on outreach activities, go to www.gogreenvisalia.org to learn more.

Good water conservation habits can be easier to start if you combine them with habits you already have. If you have good indoor habits for conserving water --shorter showers, shutting the water off in between teeth brushes, etc. --take those habits outdoors. Need help in your low-water use landscape makeover? Go to www.visalia.watersavingplants.com for a gallery of ideas courtesy of California Water Service Company.

We all can adopt habits to reduce our water use inside and outside our homes on a daily basis. These small changes can make a big difference for the City. Join me, my fellow Council members, City staff and fellow citizens in this statewide effort to save California's water.

National Park Service Announces Campaign as Centerpiece of 2016 Centennial

The National Park Service (NPS) announced that the centerpiece of its 2016 centennial will be a broad public engagement campaign to reintroduce the national parks and the work of the NPS to a new generation of Americans, inviting them to visit and get involved. The two-year effort will begin in 2015 and run throughout the NPS' 100th anniversary year in 2016. Plans for the campaign, entitled "Find Your Park," are underway in collaboration with the National Park Foundation (NPF), the official nonprofit partner of the NPS.

The NPS and the NPF will team up with partners to produce programs, events and activities that will drive broad awareness, deepen engagement and increase support for America's national parks, the work of the NPS, and its partners. In addition to making all 401 national parks go-to destinations, the campaign will highlight the historic preservation and outdoor recreation work the NPS does with communities across the country and the value it brings to Americans every day.

"We are excited to use the centennial to invite every American to get to know their national parks and to understand how our one hundred years of conservation experience translates into on-the-ground revitalization projects in their neighborhoods," said NPS Director Jonathan B. Jarvis. "Our campaign will encourage Americans to 'Find Your Park' – to discover a personal connection to a place or a story that provides inspiration or enjoyment, and to then join us in our second century of stewardship of America's most treasured places."

"We are proud to support the National Park Service in this historic milestone," said Neil Mulholland, NPF president and CEO. "Together, and in concert with many partners around the country, we will set the course for the next hundred years with an engaged citizenry who love their national parks and proudly show their support through visitation, volunteerism and philanthropy."

Marking the first phase of the campaign, the NPS and NPF unveiled two new additions to the NPS brand family. Building off its iconic arrowhead, the new graphic identities highlight the partnership between the NPS and its Congressionally chartered nonprofit partner, the NPF. The arrowhead will continue to serve as the official seal of the NPS.

In addition, the NPS and NPF both launched centennial web pages, the start of a robust communications effort that will kick into high-gear in early 2015 across all digital platforms to invite engagement in centennial activities.

The NPF has retained Grey New York to develop the multi-channel public engagement campaign, which includes the creation of strategic partnerships with media, corporations and talent.

To help guide centennial efforts, Jarvis asked the National Park System Advisory Board to create a Centennial Advisory Committee made up of 31 members representing the broad spectrum of NPS partners and stakeholders. The committee is chaired by Gretchen Long.

For more information about the NPS Centennial, visit www.nps.gov/centennial or www.nationalparks.org/centennial.

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– Sam Sciacca

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www.kaweahdelta.org

Six Californias

Continued from p. 1

hope that a new state adopts a similar healthcare funding strategy as West Virginia, which has been successful in receiving federal assistance for healthcare.

"It's not likely that a state of Central California would emerge, but if one did, we would have a stronger voice at the state and local level in relation to our local causes," he added.

"Breaking up California into six separate states will eliminate the state's diverse economy that has helped protect and stabilize the state from broad swings in economic cycles," said Michael Washam, Tulare County economic development manager. "The current makeup of the California economy includes agriculture, high tech, manufacturing, aerospace, research and development, and entertainment. The diversity helps smooth the effects of major swings in a particular sector of the economy, much like a mutual funds versus holding an individual stock.

"The economy of Central California relies primarily on the agriculture industry and if it became a separate state, it will be more susceptible to swings in the economy," Washam continued. "Much like what occurred in Texas and the oil industry – boom or bust. Central California will be without a port of its own and thus, transporting to the ports will be subject to and regulated by the federal government under the Interstate Commerce Commission.

"Six California states is not good for a diverse California economy, not good for the Central Valley and ultimately, not going to happen," he said. "This proposal, while it may be fun to speculate what might happen to the economy of Central California, will never pass congress. There is no way that the U.S. Congress will give 10 additional senate seats to California. That would mean the 'former California' would control 12 seats or one-tenth of the entire senate. This is not going to happen and unfortunately – actually fortunately – I have too much real economic activity to spend time speculating on a hypothetical situation."

Tulare County Supervisor Allen Ishida believes, "We'd be further isolated because we don't have enough votes.

"Our water will come from out of the state," he added. "We'd have to go through another state to export our products. Sixty percent of our fruits and nuts are exported out of the country. I think it's a poorly devised plan. It's just a bad idea."

"You would have two U.S. Senators, both coming from Central California!" said Draper. "I believe the U.S. Government will finally notice that you exist."

"I think that law enforcement would be impacted in a negative way," said acting Tulare County Sheriff Mike Boudreaux. "It's time for new infrastructure and a lot of that money is coming from the state. Law enforcement would be impacted because the money wouldn't be there."

He said that sheriff's department narcotics teams, which currently receive funding from state grants, would likely not receive that money. "Our funding would be impacted for law enforcement at many levels.

"If there are any positives, it would force us to look at things differently," Boudreaux added. "Sometimes that can inspire new ideas."

"I've seen these proposals for the past 20 years," said Tulare County Board of Supervisors Chairman Phil Cox. "This is not a new thing. My concern with these proposals is always the numbers. I think we'd be doing more with less. You'd have six states and they'd all have to be paid for. Every time I looked at these 'split up the state' proposals, none of them seem to make good common sense."

Cox was asked if a new Central California state would be better able to focus on issues of local concern.

"That's what local government is for," he responded. "Do we really want a state doing that for us? But it would help to have a state support that."

Tim Draper

More than half of the new state of Central California would be "impoverished counties," said Cox, although he added, "I don't know if the counties would be the same. The federal money would still come, but how would that money be split? Would our share be based on our poverty rate? I just see this as a huge mathematical challenge."

"As far as the proposed six-way split, it's a challenge to do it two or three ways," said former Assemblyman Bill Maze, who was also the president and CEO of Citizens for Saving California Farming Industry, which proposed an east-west split of California several years ago. That proposal would have made the coastal counties from Los Angeles to the Bay Area into one state, and the rest of California into another. Both states would each have had about 19 million people.

Maze is not a supporter of the "Six Californias" proposal.

"If something like that happens, you're going to have mammoth battles between Fresno and Bakersfield," said Maze, who was asked if maybe they should find the biggest city between them to have as the new state capital.

"That wouldn't happen at all," he said, and referred to the effort to get the state to put a University of California campus in Visalia in the early 1990s. "We weren't even in the running."

A local four-year public university might happen in a new state, Maze acknowledged. "There would be that possibility," he said. "Now you're establishing a different type of system."

The idea to divide California into separate states seems to pop up every few years, and has ever since the state was admitted to the union in 1850.

"The first try to split the state of California was in 1851," said Chris Brewer, local historian and author. "They tried to split it into two states, Northern California and California. It actually did pass the state legislature. It got to the U.S. Congress that shut it down. My suspicion is it was due to the issue of the slave states. (Southern) California would probably have been a slave state."

Brewer, who also works for Caltrans, addressed the impact of Six Californias on local roads.

"If the state of California were to split into six separate states, high-speed rail won't be implemented because it will be seen as there being no need for it in the Central Valley state," he said, adding that the conservative government of the new state would immediately kill the project.

"The state of California already has too many highways and local roads to fund, and to repair," said Brewer. "What's going to happen when you have divide that money into six? Right now, we have a system of priorities that go through a centralized funding source in each county. The problem is that money is going to be diluted so heavily that you're not going to have any money to do anything, especially with highways.

"We have two major arteries in Central California that connect Northern California and Southern California. Those highways are major, major thoroughfares and they take a lot of money to restore and keep the maintenance going. I cannot imagine that there would possibly be enough money for just those two highways if we did a six-way split in the funding."

"My first thought is that we could suffer from a loss of funding," said Craig Wheaton, Ed.D., Visalia Unified School District superintendent. "I would have to do some research but the Central California section is higher poverty than many other areas and it could be a challenge to replace lost funding that now comes from other parts of California's economy.

Draper was asked if the low per capita income in a new Central California state would result in an underfunding in programs such as education.

"Turns out they are underfunded today with the current government," responded Draper. "Central California represents the have-nots of the current regime. When Central California has its own government, Central California can drive its own education, and not be beholden to people in Sacramento, who have not been providing good education to Central Californians."

Wheaton also considered the possible benefits to education with a new state government.

"It may be easier for Central California to really prioritize education for funding," he said. "I am assuming that Central California would be much more fiscally conservative and would spend less money on many of California's social programs. This might result in more funding for education.

"Some great advantages would be to start over with the over-burdensome education code and regulations," he continued. "I would think we would gain more support to modify and streamline teacher and administrative evaluation and dismissal procedures. A general deregulation of education could provide much more local control, the school board could actually make more local decisions, and it may relieve some of the cost of education. I would think, after all is said and done, the important work we do – teaching kids, would remain the same."

"The Central Valley could become a state of its own that is more conservative as far as politics goes, which is terribly important," said David Miller, manager and president of Pacific Employers in Visalia. "I like the opportunity we would have."

He added that currently there is no opportunity influencing state government in areas such as water and highways. "The state looks at us like we're the red-headed stepchild.

"We could have a different political attitude that we see taking place in a number of states, like Texas and North Dakota, where they welcome business," Miller said. "We can quit acting like anybody who hires an employee is the enemy. Virtually any law that is made (in Sacramento) has no protection for the employer."

"If Central California was a separate state, it would probably give agriculture a much larger voice in our regulatory, legislative and governmental roles," said Tricia Stever Blattler, executive director of the Tulare County Farm Bureau. "More of our elected officials would certainly come from and live near rural areas and have a greater appreciation of the value agriculture plays in our economy, and how much it impacts jobs, economic vitality and the generation of income for our communities."

She expressed concern that "interstate commerce laws may become more difficult in trucking and transporting goods to markets," but said, "A Central California state would likely be one of the most affordable places to do business amongst the new states and therefore would likely create a demand for our resources, our land and our tax base for those businesses who want to get into a more business-friendly state than coastal or southern or bay area states would probably provide."

On the negative side, Blattler said, "If inputs for agriculture were manufactured in other states outside of Central California, it could negatively impact our production and overhead costs, having to pay higher taxes on goods and services we have to buy from another state. Central California's agriculture diverse specialty crops would command a greater value in the market place going to other states, but might also face greater hurdles being transported to those states through laws, regulations, taxes, etc."

Draper responded to this concern with, "All that will be worked out in state compacts that will be negotiated among the state leaders selected to help organize the new state. I would guess that Central California would be in a strong negotiating position since they produce the food that feeds the world."

Blattler said a Central California state would, "remain a very diverse agriculture cropping pattern, but water demands are still very critical here, and if our state was in demand as a 'business-friendly' state, I could still see more competition for resources and outside states wanting to make grabs for water coming from the Sierras. Perhaps we could re-design our water rights system in our new state and make sure that all water from the Sierras and underground our Central California state could remain in the basin, and no exports to the urban areas, bay or southern states would be allowed."

"The reason it is desperate now with the current status quo is that Sacramento doles water out to Central California like allowance to a child," Draper said. "With Six Californias, Central California will be able to build its own state compacts with other states, and get the water from wherever it wants, and spend properly on infrastructure, so less water is wasted."

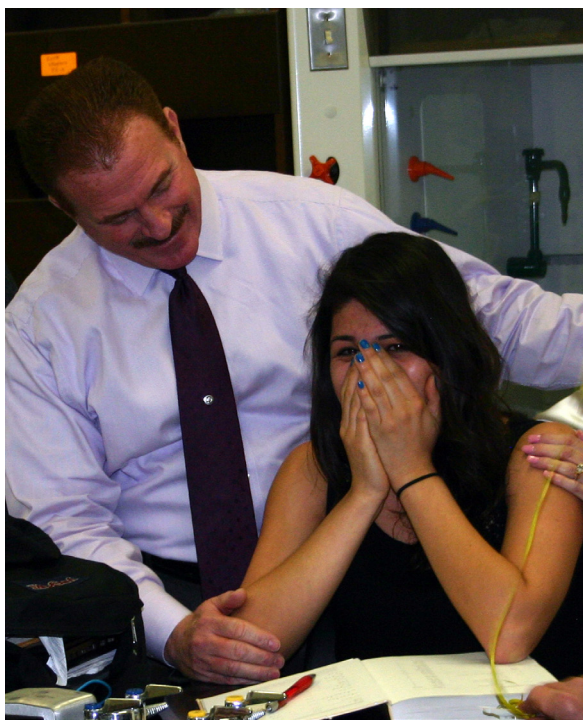
Draper estimated that one-third of the water in California is wasted because of poor infrastructure.

COS Student Isis Frausto-Vicencio Wins Prestigious Jack Kent Cooke Scholarship

STAFF REPORTS

College of the Sequoias sophomore Isis Frausto-Vicencio received the news last week that she is a recipient of the Jack Kent Cooke scholarship.

The Jack Kent Cooke Foundation awards these transfer scholarships to a small group of the top community college students across the nation who are seeking to complete their bachelor's degrees. This year, the foundation is only awarding 85 scholarships from among more than 3,000 applicants. Recipients receive $30,000 a year for three years to cover educational expenses.



Isis Frausto-Vicencio receives the news of her award with Stan Carrizosa, president/superintendent of COS.

Frausto-Vicencio is a chemistry major with a 3.96 grade-point average. Among her many previous accomplishments, she was part of the NASA National Community College Aerospace Scholar's Program at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena, where she earned two summer internships. She is part of COS' MESA program (Math, Engineering and Science Achievement) and has worked as a peer mentor for MESA and the PASEO (Promoting Achievement and Scholarship with Enrichment Opportunities) grant program.

Frausto-Vicencio is a graduate of Strathmore High School, the first person in her family to complete a high school diploma and the first to attend college. She has already been accepted for admission to UC Irvine, UC Santa Cruz and UC Santa Barbara. She is awaiting word from other four-year colleges and has yet to decide which university she will attend. She plans to major in chemistry for her undergraduate degree with a minor in earth science.

This is the fourth time in seven years that a COS student has won this prestigious and competitive scholarship.

Student Projects Sought for 'Night at the 21st Century Museum'

On May 14, the Heritage Complex in Tulare will be transformed into a showcase of student projects as part of "A Night at the 21st Century Museum." This new event will feature dozens of documentaries, live performances, literacy projects, enterprise ventures and other exhibits from elementary, middle and high school student groups across the county.

According to Joy Soares, Tulare County Office of Education's Project Based Learning (PBL) staff development and curriculum specialist, the event was created with two goals in mind: offer a format where students and teachers can share their high quality work, and create an event where parents, community members and other teachers and students can gain an understanding of Project Based Learning.

"Many Tulare County teachers and students are examining what it means to be 21st century teachers and learners," says Soares. "A Night at the 21st Century Museum is a place where we can further the discussions together as students, teachers, parents and communities."

One of the projects featured at the event is a restaurant concept developed by students at Countryside High School in Tulare. Students Taylor Saltkill, Nicole Whitten, Rickelle Floyd, Genesis Deniz and Ruben Gonzales are working to create a restaurant from top to bottom. The team will choose a theme for their restaurant, research appropriate restaurant décor, create the menu, develop job descriptions, learn about food safety, design their attire and serve meals to a panel of judges.

According to school counselor Lisa Jacobo, the Countryside project is an excellent example of PBL. "Students are prioritizing and problem-solving," she says. "They are working together as a group, observing, imagining, researching and revising. It's a process where they realize that they can't do their job without the help of the others."

Five students from Dinuba High School's newly created Academy of Engineering and Construction Management have been asked to design the exhibition space for A Night at the 21st Century Museum. Dinuba High School will begin its program next fall with Marlena Celaya as lead teacher. Working with the essential question, "How can we design a 21st century museum where all of the visitors and exhibitors will learn together?" the students are beginning to develop a scale drawing of the space and thinking about how to organize dozens of exhibits and performance areas to maximize visitor engagement.

"I hope that our students will learn what is needed in order to create an exceptional plan – whether it is for this museum or any other business sector project," says Celaya.

Teachers who would like to submit examples of Project Based Learning for exhibition at A Night at the 21st Century Museum are encouraged to call 647-9973 before April 25. For additional information, call Soares at 651-0501.

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TCHaulers.com

The Farmersville Chamber of Commerce office on Front Street has been empty since 2011.

Farmersville

Continued from p. 1

ask to lease the office at a similar cost.

Twenty local businesspeople attended the March 13 meeting at the Pizza N Pub Restaurant, which launched the current effort. The meeting organized by local musician Freddy "DJ Musicman" Espinoza, with assistance from Macareno.

In addition to helping establish an active chamber in the city, Macareno's role will be to ensure the group is following general accepted accounting principals, Robert's Rules of Order, and best practices in board recruitment and development, membership services, fundraising and event planning.

"From the initial meeting, I think you're going to see more participation than in the past," said Macareno. "From talking to past executive board members, they didn't have the volunteers to execute their goals."

The meeting was announced in a release issued by Farmersville Mayor Pro Tem Gregorio Gomez, who "took heat" from others on the Farmersville City Council about the release being on city letterhead. "The city made it clear that it's not going to take an active role in it," said Gomez. "I was told that if I was going to be a part of the chamber, it wasn't as a city representative."

Farmersville is the only city in Tulare County that doesn't currently have a chamber of commerce.

"I think it's very important that our businesses have something where they can come together and advocate for themselves," said Gomez. "(A chamber) can promote the city to bring in more businesses because that way we can improve our tax base."

"A chamber of commerce can unite businesses with the goal of stimulating economic development," said Macareno. "When you see what a chamber of commerce can do, there's a lot of interest in having it in the community."

"With the chamber, we really want to connect with the community," said Espinoza, who wants the chamber to help plan festivals and other events. He also hopes to see the chamber have a website and Facebook page, which would provide news and information about events and the current needs of the chamber.

"One of the ideas I had was a campaign to get people to buy local and get them to realize when we shop outside the city, the tax money stays there," he added. "We go shopping a lot in Visalia, but we need to make a conscious effort to keep things in town."

"The passion and motivation of the group is encouraging and I look forward to the growth in momentum toward efforts in more events and activities for Farmersville and Tulare County residents to enjoy," said Macareno.

He noted the success of the Friday Night Marketplace in Lindsay and said he would like to see a similar event in Farmersville, as well as "iconic special events to attract businesses to open shops in Farmersville."

Breathometer, Fathers Against Drunk Driving Partner Up

STAFF REPORTS

"We have partnered with Breathometer, Inc., makers of the industry's first smartphone-based breathalyzer," announced Robert Ybarra of Fathers Against Drunk Driving (FADD), the national organization he founded in Tulare County. "They have created a mobile app, and a hi-tech device that transforms a smartphone into a portable, digital alcohol breathalyzer in seconds."

Breathometer made a one-time donation to the FADD Foundation and will donate a portion of the proceeds from every unit sold through FADD programs. FADD will exclusively use the Breathometer with its ongoing community awareness and youth engagement initiatives. As part of the partnership, Breathometer CEO Charles Michael Yim will join the board of directors of FADD.

"We share a common mission with Fathers Against Drunk Driving and saw several ways we could work together to have a greater impact on the community," said Yim. "We support the many outreach efforts of FADD and are very pleased to offer support, and a financial donation today and over the coming year."

Launched in 2013, the Breathometer transforms any smartphone into a breathalyzer within seconds — helping consumers monitor their alcohol consumption and make smarter decisions when drinking. Small enough to fit on a key chain, Breathometer plugs into a smartphone audio jack and together with a mobile app, transforms it into a portable breathalyzer that measures blood alcohol concentration.

"FADD is on the cutting edge of technology in raising awareness and prevention of alcohol-related crashes with this partnership," said Ybarra. "No other organization has this type of technology."

Fathers Against Drunk Driving was created to form partnerships in order to conduct mass mobilizations throughout the U.S. to reduce and eliminate deadly alcohol-related crashes. With associate chapters, students, teachers, high schools and law enforcement agencies, FADD implements education awareness prevention campaigns, programs and events. The foundation hopes to continue expanding its efforts to more regions in the U.S. and other countries in the near future.

For more information, visit www.faddintl.org or www.breathometer.com.

Political Fix

Continued from p. 3

of State election, another relative unknown, Republican Pete Peterson, leads the polls with the support of 30% of likely voters, with only 17% choosing Democrat State Senator Alex Padilla. The three other candidates came in behind by a large margin. According to Mr. Di Camillo, "Padilla appears to be the chief beneficiary of Leland Yee's withdrawal. When Yee's name was removed from the candidate list in the days following his arrest, support for Padilla increased seven points from 10% to 17%." Not even Mr. Yee's withdrawal though could make Mr. Padilla the front runner. The undecideds are an even bigger factor in this race, coming in at 41%.

Getting back to the Controller's election --the most powerful statewide officeholder, Mr. Perez, must have thought he had this race all sewn up. *The Fresno Bee* also has just endorsed Ms. Yee and Ms. Swearengin as the more qualified candidates over Mr. Perez. But with $2.4 million in his war chest and a likely runoff with a little-known mayor, Mr. Perez is still the likely victor.

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Lot 14 Tulare Business Park 3.01 Acres……..…....$ 555,000
Lot 15 Tulare Business Park 1.43 Acres……..…....$ 350,000
157 Acres Industrial Zoned Land ……$ 8,276,400
5 acres of land for ground lease Industrial zoned……..$2,500 rent
5 Acres (66 Unites Approved) Multi Family Development…….. $1,250,000
Approved Gas Station Site 25,000 SF…… $650,000
Retail Space for Lease East Tulare Ave & Mooney …… $1.85 rent
CBD Tulare 9,000 SF Office 157 South K FOR SALE…… $425,000
20,000 SF on 5 Acres two buildings FOR SALE or Lease..... $950,000
18,000 Sq.Ft. Building with tenants FOR SALE……..…..$420,000
6,000 SF on 3 acres w3 Buildings for Lease …….…... $3,500
2240 SF on south K For Lease per month……..…....$1120
3,000 SF on south K & Paige FOR SALE……..…..$$350,000
Auto shops 1520 Sq. Ft ……. ……..$860 rent
Auto related Shop 3,040 Sq. Ft. ……..$1,500 rent
16354 Shopping Center FOR SALE ……..…..$2,395,000
9,000 Sq. Ft. Retail Building Tulare Ave For Sale or Lease……..$4,000 rent

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National NeighborWorks Association President Chris Krehmeyer (left) presents the Richard H. Stallings Lifetime Achievement Award to Peter Carey, CEO of Self-Help Enterprises.

Peter Carey Receives National Award for Housing and Community Development

STAFF REPORTS

The National NeighborWorks Association announced that Peter Carey, CEO of Self-Help Enterprises based in Visalia, is among the winners of its 10th Annual Excellence Awards. The awards, presented annually to outstanding practitioners in the field of housing and community development, were announced at the Annual NeighborWorks Executive Directors Presentation.

Carey won the Richard Stallings Lifetime Achievement Award, which recognizes a director who has served in an executive position in the housing or community development field for more than 20 years and has made a significant contribution to the field.

Carey has been in housing and community development since 1974, working for Self-Help Enterprises, the nation's oldest, and one of the most highly regarded mutual self-help housing development organizations in the country. In 1990, he became its third executive director, and since that time has led an organization that has developed over 6,000 self-help single-family homes and 1,306 rental housing units, rehabilitated or repaired 6,220 homes, assisted 1,600 additional first-time homebuyers with financing, provided education and counseling services to 6,900 families, and was the catalyst for over 28,000 new water and sewer connections.

Under Carey's leadership, Self-Help has won the Fresno Bee Excellence in Business Award, the Maxwell Award for Excellence, and the Home Builders Association of Tulare and Kings Counties Builder of the Year award. In addition to organizational awards, he has received the Clay Cochran Award for Distinguished Service in Housing for the Rural Poor, and in 2005 was a recipient of the Mike Sviridoff National Leadership Award for vision and leadership in community development. Carey is also a former mayor of the City of Visalia.

Other winners include the Practitioner of the Year Award to Peggy Hutchison, CEO of the Primavera Foundation in Tucson; and the Emerging Leader Award to Robert Corley, executive director of NeighborWorks Southern Massachusetts.

Self-Help Enterprises is a nationally recognized housing and community development organization that pioneered the concept of organized mutual self-help housing construction in the United States. This year, it celebrates 50 years of improving the living conditions and communities of low-income families in the San Joaquin Valley.

National NeighborWorks Association unites housing and community development practitioners to advocate for affordable housing and economic opportunities for individuals, families, communities and neighborhoods throughout the United States.

'Heartbleed' Bug Threatens Computers

BETTER BUSINESS BUREAU

Unless you've been vacationing on a tropical island for the past week, you've likely heard of the "Heartbleed" bug, a computer security vulnerability that can reveal the contents of a server's memory and expose private data such as user names, passwords and even credit card information.

The Heartbleed bug exploits a flaw in the Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) of popular open source software called OpenSSL. SSL is the standard security technology that establishes an encrypted link between a user's web browser and the server where a website is hosted. It is used to secure numerous kinds of data transfers, including email, instant messaging, social media, and business transactions. Encryption is essential to Internet security.

The flaw, discovered on April 7 but apparently in existence for two years, means that attackers can copy a server's digital keys and use them to impersonate servers to decode communications from the past (and, potentially, the future).

For businesses: BBB recommends that businesses immediately check to see if their website(s) use Open SSL or have been vulnerable. If vulnerability exists, businesses should work with their IT department or computer professional to install a more secure SSL on their websites.

For consumers: CNET has also published a list of the top 100 websites, which it is updating regularly as it checks for vulnerabilities and repairs. Consumers can check this list or use the tool mentioned above to see if websites they regularly use are free of problems, or have fixed vulnerabilities.

It's also imperative that consumers change passwords on all sites, particularly those that retain personal identifying information. Change your password after confirming that the site is not vulnerable or has fixed its SSL.

The "Stop. Think. Connect." campaign offers the following suggestions to protect your identity:

Secure your accounts: Ask for protection beyond passwords. Many account providers now offer additional ways for you verify who you are before you conduct business on that site.

Make passwords long and strong: Combine capital and lowercase letters with numbers and symbols to create a more secure password.

Unique account, unique password: Separate passwords for every account helps to thwart cybercriminals.

Write it down and keep it safe: Everyone can forget a password. Keep a list that's stored in a safe, secure place away from your computer.

Own your online presence: When available, set the privacy and security settings on websites to your comfort level for information sharing. It's OK to limit how and with whom you share information.

BBB also suggests choosing passwords that are phrases (for instance, ilovetofish) and making each letter O into a zero to make the password more complex.

Fitch Affirms 'A' Rating for Sierra View Local Health Care District

STAFF REPORTS

Fitch Ratings has affirmed the 'A' rating on two bonds for the Sierra View Local Health Care District: $18.555 million refunding revenue bonds, series 2010; and $51.52 million revenue bonds, series 2007.

"The rating outlook is stable," Fitch stated in an April 7 press release. "The rating affirmation is primarily driven by the district's strong balance sheet with 425.8 days cash on hand and 183.6% cash to debt at December 31, 2013. Fitch expects the balance sheet to remain strong."

Fitch's main credit concern is the district's high debt burden with maximum annual debt service. At 5.7% of total revenue in fiscal year 2013 (which ended June 30, 2103), the ratings company finds this number unfavorable compared to its 'A' category median of 3.1%.

Although the district's profitability levels are healthy, there is a significant reliance on supplemental funds for this profitability, according to Fitch. Supplemental funds include about $7-8 million of Medicare and Medi-Cal disproportionate share funds a year.

Sierra View has ongoing capital needs to address seismic retrofit regulatory requirements, as well as growth initiatives in various service lines. The district has more than $50 million of remaining bond and capital lease proceeds to fund these projects.

Fitch expects the district to maintain profitability consistent with its fiscal 2013 performance. Fitch also expects the strong balance sheet to be maintained.

The Sierra View Local Health Care District owns and operates a 167 licensed-bed hospital, a cancer center, an outpatient imaging and laboratory center, an outpatient dialysis center and an ambulatory surgery center operated as a department of the hospital, all in Porterville.

The district generated total operating revenue of $135.8 million in fiscal 2013. There has been management turnover since Fitch's last rating review, including a new chief executive officer and chief financial officer in 2013.

Jones

Continued from p. 4

itself is hands above the competition. And she's doing an amazing job at it. Her advice has been keeping me calm and keeping me grounded, and reminding me why I'm running. Between Abigail, my wife – my wife, first of all, because she sees me when they don't – there is a constant encouragement that probably means more than anything to me.

Between my wife, Abigail, and Becky Shields, they keep me into it pretty good.

HOW ARE YOU DIFFERENT FROM OTHER DEMOCRATS?

You know, I don't know. To answer that question, I would have to know what all other Democrats are like, and I tell people that's our biggest blessing – one of the things our military fights for is our right to be different, our right to be individuals. You know, I would hope I'm different just based off of my life experiences. I appreciate other people's differences. I really try not to make this as Carlton running against anyone else. To me that's when politics are broke, when one person is running against another person. The way I look at it, and I've always looked at it like this, is there's a seat available. I'm going to show everyone and tell everyone the type of representative I want to be, and encourage them to vote for me and try to listen, and show them my goals and the way I want to deliver their message – it isn't my own message, it's the district's message – and stay away from running against anybody else. I'm running for a seat, and it wouldn't matter who else is running for that seat, that I'm running for that seat. Or if nobody else is running, my goal is the seat of District 26, not to beat anyone. I'm not running against anyone.

> *"I think at the end of the day, people just want true representation, and one of my goals is to make sure that people see that your name is bigger than your party…"*
>
> *— Carlton Jones*

HOW DO YOU THINK GOVERNOR BROWN IS DOING?

Currently, I represent a small district of the city of Tulare, which I hope that people will see that I'm representing the entire Tulare, which is made up of 65,000 people. I'm running for a district that represents 450,000 people, and I'm seeing the challenges that they feel there. Any governor, he represents the entire state. He represents a state that is extremely divided, and as a coach I always tell people it's not my job to teach people how to play the sport – it's my job to get them to play together. In the political realm it's the same thing, especially when you're a partisan representative. He's still the entire state's governor. He's still the Governor of California. And when we're so divided by party, you know, I understand his challenges. I've prayed for him. I hope at the end of the day when he leaves his seat, he can look back and be proud of himself. My job as a Californian is, he's our governor right now and until the voters say something different, I'm going to support him. And it would be the same if I was a state official. As a State Assemblyman, he would be my governor, and I want to work with him. My goal isn't to change the way he does his seat, it's to change the way we're looked at here in District 26.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON GUNS?

I believe in the Second Amendment. I don't believe that individuals should own tanks. We shouldn't be able to outarm our military. We need to hold any criminal, regardless if it's a crime with a gun or not, we need to hold them accountable for the letter of the law. You know, I'm a firm believer that it's the person who commits the crime and it's not what they commit the crime with. I don't own guns now, but I have in the past and I was a responsible gun owner. And I think there are a lot of responsible gun owners who get labeled by the bad actions of individuals. And that's the same with anything.

THE ACA IS NOT GOING TO COVER UNDOCUMENTED PEOPLE. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THAT?

I don't thinks that's right. I think if you're here working and you're paying taxes into it you should be afforded the benefits of that system.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON FRACKING?

I disagree with it because anything that does unknown damage isn't safe. And for the benefits it may have as far as the economy, it's twice as bad for the environment.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE HIGH-SPEED RAIL?

The high-speed rail is in my opinion something that can be good. And this is my personal opinion. Here's an opportunity to create jobs to kind of diversify our investment as a district. But once again, I represent a district. And my personal opinion would just be a part of the message that needs to be delivered. So, at the end of the day if I'm for high-speed rail and the majority of my constituents are against it, then the message I need to deliver to Sacramento is that we're against it.

Andres

Continued from p. 4

party alone. There must be cooperation.

WHO ARE YOU SUPPORTING FOR GOVERNOR?

For now, my priority is my candidacy. I wish someone from the San Joaquin Valley will run for governor of California. I hope my candidacy and this opportunity for me to be elected--to represent District 26 in the State Assembly--will inspire other local leaders to make a difference in the state government.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON GUNS IN THIS SOCIETY?

I am committed to protecting the freedom and safety of fellow citizens with the Second Amendment.

> *"I don't quit until the job is done."*
>
> *— Teresita Andres*

THE ACA WILL NOT COVER UNDOCUMENTED PEOPLE. WHAT ARE YOUR THOUGHTS ON THIS?

We first need to prioritize utilizing our resources for the health and wellness of our citizens and permanent residents. In my healthcare experience, I have met many people eligible for benefits and who advocate for strong healthcare. We also need to pay attention to our veterans, including those with mental health issues like PTSD.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON FRACKING?

As of now, I support more alternative energy sources. For instance, we can invest in solar energy and even in biofuels since the San Joaquin Valley is rich in agriculture. If we do so, our Valley will prosper further, and we can also ensure the health, safety and economic security of our people.

WHAT ARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE WATER BOND INITIATIVE?

I do not support borrowing more funds, which will increase our debt. I believe we can solve the water issue in innovative ways. Not only do we need to be conservative with water, but also with our funds and other resources. Yet we can still invest in our people. I understand, for instance, that many local dairy farms had to close due to the water issue and high price of feeds. This should be an opportunity to motivate us all in finding effective solutions. I propose investing in local businesses and in clean energy sources in order to both save and generate money in order to fund solutions to the water crisis. We can give tax breaks to entrepreneurs, because in innovation, we can find solutions. They are an asset of our state. Helping our businessmen stay in California can also help keep our economy alive.

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE HIGH-SPEED RAIL?

Agriculture is the backbone of the San Joaquin Valley, feeding the nation. The high-speed rail can destroy much farmland and natural resources. We need to conserve our resources, including our homes, property and livelihood.

Are you a wartime veteran or surviving spouse?

FREE apple pie & ice cream for all veterans

Veterans Aid

YOU OR YOUR SURVIVING SPOUSE MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR VETERANS AID AND ATTENDANCE BENEFITS.

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Surviving spouses of wartime veterans are also eligible for benefits that can pay **up to $1,113** per month for care.

For complete details and to RSVP, please call (559) 624-3500.

EVENT DETAILS

THU, APRIL 24 | 6:00–7:30 PM
SAT, APRIL 26 | 10:00–11:30 AM
Speaker: **Gilbert Fleming**, VA Accredited Attorney

The Central Valley's PEOPLE'S CHOICE Awards 2012 The Fresno Bee

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News in Brief...

VISALIA-PORTERVILLE AREA RANKS POORLY IN SPRAWL STUDY

The Visalia-Porterville metropolitan area placed 142nd on a list of 221 metropolitan areas in *Measuring Sprawl 2014*, which also analyzed development patterns in 994 counties in the United States as of 2010, looking to see which communities are more compact and connected, and which are more sprawling.

Researchers used four primary factors – residential and employment density; neighborhood mix of homes, jobs and services; strength of activity centers and downtowns; and accessibility of the street network – to evaluate development in these areas and assign a "Sprawl Index" score to each.

The researchers found that several quality of life factors improve as index scores rise. Individuals in compact, connected metro areas have greater economic mobility. Individuals in these areas spend less on the combined cost of housing and transportation, and have greater options for the type of transportation to take. In addition, individuals in compact, connected metro areas tend to live longer, safer, healthier lives than their peers in metro areas with sprawl. Obesity is less prevalent in compact counties, and fatal car crashes are less common.

For more information, visit www.smartgrowthamerica.org.

TULARE COUNTY ELECTION SCHEDULE ANNOUNCED

Tulare County Registrar of Voters Rita A. Woodard is reminding all Tulare County residents that the upcoming primary election will be held on Tuesday, June 3. The last day to register to vote in this election is Monday, May 19.

Voter registration cards are available at locations throughout Tulare County. To obtain a mail-in registration card, call 624-7300 or 1-800-345-VOTE. If you prefer, you can also register at www.sos.ca.gov. Vote by Mail ballots will be available beginning Monday, May 5.

Tuesday, May 27, is the last day the Registrar of Voters Office may receive Vote by Mail ballot requests through the mail. After May 27, voters can come to the Elections Office located at Government Plaza, 5951 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, to request a Vote by Mail ballot in person.

Any Tulare County resident who will be sworn in as a United States Citizen by a federal judge after Monday, May 19, but no later than Tuesday, May 27, may register and vote at the Tulare County Registrar of Voters Office. They will be required to show their Naturalization Certificate.

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA GAS INTRODUCES NEW SMART METER

Southern California Gas Company is upgrading residential and most business natural gas meters by adding an advanced meter communications device. With this upgrade, you will be able to: view up-to-date hourly and daily usage information and estimated costs; set and achieve your savings and conservation goals; take an energy survey to learn how to conserve energy and save money; and analyze your usage over time.

If you have not received an installation letter, you can view the installation schedule at www.socalgas.com/innovation/advanced-meter/installation-schedule/index.shtml

FINAL PUBLIC WORKSHOP SET FOR MATHENY TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE STUDY

Residents of Matheny Tract will meet from 3:30-5pm on Saturday, April 26, at Palo Verde School, 9637 Ave. 196, to hear about the community's preferred projects and next steps in the Matheny Tract Transportation Infrastructure Plan.

Consultant Omni-Means, as well as staff of Tulare County Resource Management Agency, will review what has been learned through previous community meetings and analysis of community transportation needs. The consultant will also review financial opportunities and resources, including potential sources of grant funding to make the improvements needed and desired by community members.

Improvements noted by residents include improved street lighting, roads and drainage, along with sidewalks and walkways to improve walkability and make bicycling safer in Matheny Tract.

Refreshments, activities for children and translators will be provided at the meeting. For more information, contact Gary Mills at Omni-Means at 734-5895 or gmills@omnimeans.com.

PORTERVILLE COLLEGE, EMPLOYMENT CONNECTION TO HOLD JOB FAIR

Porterville College, in conjunction with Employment Connection, is looking for businesses that are hiring to participate in the Second Annual Job Fair on Tuesday, May 6, from 9am to noon in the Porterville College Gymnasium, 100 E. College Ave., Porterville. Single booths are available at no charge.

If you are a business owner who is hiring, or a human resources representative, and are interested in being part of this event, call 788-1400 or email Rudy.Roman@edd.ca.gov. The free event is open to the public. For more information, visit www.portervillecollege.edu.

KAWEAH DELTA LINDSAY HEALTH CLINIC WELCOMES NEPHROLOGIST

Kaweah Delta Health Care District welcomes Roger Haley, M.D., a nephrologist, to Lindsay Health Clinic. Dr. Haley is board certified in nephrology and internal medicine and is seeing patients twice a month at Kaweah Delta Lindsay Health Clinic, 839 N. Sequoia Ave. Dr. Haley treats and manages kidney disease, kidney stones or renal failure, chronic urinary tract infections, and other disorders related to the kidneys.

Dr. Haley, who was also recently appointed medical director of Kaweah Delta's dialysis centers in Visalia and Porterville, is a graduate of Creighton University School of Medicine and completed an internship and residency at Naval Medical Center in San Diego.

For information, call 562-1546

DO YOU SPEAK LIKE A VALLEY RESIDENT?

When you are thirsty on a hot summer day, do you reach for a "pop," "soda," "coke" or "soft drink"? (Pretend for a moment that there is no "beer," "brewski," "suds" or "cold one" option.)

To find out if you speak the way most folks in the Valley do, take the Cambridge Online Survey of World Englishes at www.tekstlab.uio.no/cambridge_survey. Most of the questions used are based on those in the Harvard Dialect Survey, a linguistics project begun in 2002 by Bert Vaux and Scott Golder.

The data for the quiz and maps on the website come from over 350,000 survey responses collected from August to October 2013 by Josh Katz, a graphics editor for the *New York Times* who developed this quiz. The colors on the large map correspond to the probability that a randomly selected person in that location would respond to a randomly selected survey question the same way that you did.

WEST HILLS COLLEGE AMONG BEST 2014 ONLINE PSYCHOLOGY DEGREE PROGRAMS

BestOnlineColleges.org analyzed data from the National Center for Education Statistics to create a list of the 2014 Best Online Psychology Degree Programs. As a result, West Hills College in Lemoore is among the 21 schools ranked and featured at: www.bestonlinecolleges.org/best-online-psychology-degree-programs.

The list incorporates thorough research into everything from a school's enrollment and graduation rates to the quality and accreditation of its specialty psychology programs.

SOCALGAS ANNOUNCES APRIL IS NATIONAL SAFE DIGGING MONTH

April is National Safe Digging Month, but this isn't about checking out the local Hallmark offerings. Instead this is about Southern California Gas Co. (SoCalGas) reminding residents and businesses to call 811 to have utility-owned lines marked before digging in the garden or at construction sites. Calling 811 or Underground Service Alert will help avoid possible injury or damage to hidden gas lines or service interruption.

A utility line is damaged by digging once every three minutes nationwide, and many of these incidents are caused by failure of the professional excavator or homeowner to call 811 before beginning their digging project. Even if relatively minor projects are involved, such as putting up a new wall or fence, building a deck, planting or removing large trees or any other renovations, the digging necessary for these projects can result in hitting gas lines if they aren't located prior to the work.

"Since gas lines that serve homes and businesses are located underground and out of sight, residents and business owners won't know where they are located," said Rick Morrow, senior vice president of gas operations and system integrity for SoCalGas.

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS, DARDEN RESTAURANTS PARTNER ON CAREER AND HEALTH PROGRAMS

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoia has been selected to receive a $2,000 grant as part of the Restaurant Community Grants program from the Darden Restaurants Foundation, Inc., the charitable arm of Darden Restaurants. The grants program, now in its third year, empowers each restaurant in the Darden family of brands to help award a $1,000 grant to support community programs.

The donation will enable Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias members to participate in educational and career programs that focus on the value and importance of a high school diploma. Other programs give guidance and knowledge to enhance healthy lifestyles and experiences that benefit the whole child, not just the academics portion of their club experience.

Darden's Red Lobster, Olive Garden, LongHorn Steakhouse, Bahama Breeze, Seasons 52, The Capital Grille, Eddie V's and Yard House brands participated in the program. For more information about the Darden Foundation, visit www.dardenfoundation.com.

Farmers Offered Funding to Help Nesting Tricolored Blackbirds in Their Fields

STAFF REPORTS

Farmers who have tricolored blackbirds nesting in their fields may be eligible for financial assistance from USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) to delay harvesting and allow the birds 35 days to fledge their young. Interested producers have until May 2 to apply for this funding.

"This is a unique approach but one that has been shown to work," says Carlos Suarez, NRCS state conservationist for California. "Our goal is to work with our partners to create a strong incentive for farmers to voluntarily help these birds recover."

Every spring, tricolored blackbirds build large colonies of nests in the Central Valley areas that were once marshy ecosystems and are now cropland. About 43% of the birds now use silage crops such as triticale and wheat to build their nests. Usually, the winter-planted crops are harvested before the birds have fledged, resulting in great declines in the tricolored blackbird populations.

Tricolored blackbirds (Photo by Cathy Henry, Natural Resources Conservation Service, California)

The species is federally listed as a Bird of Conservation Concern, a California State Species of Special Concern, and also protected under the provisions of the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Tricolored blackbirds may choose different fields in different years and only farmers in Fresno, Kern, Kings, Madera, Merced, Riverside, Stanislaus, and Tulare counties, who actually have tricolored blackbirds on their property in a winter silage crop, are eligible to participate.

"You never know for sure where the birds will decide to nest in a given year," said Jesse Bahm and Keiller Kyle, a team of biologists with NRCS and Audubon respectively. "Tricolored blackbirds are colonial nesters and when they choose a nesting area it can mean everything to the success of thousands of birds—but some headaches to the farmers who find themselves playing host to the colonies."

Farmers with tricolored blackbirds can help the birds by delaying their harvesting until the young can fly away. Last year, the decision of six Tulare and Kern County farmers to delay their harvest schedule resulted in saving more than 65,000 rare tricolored blackbirds – one-fifth of the species' entire global population. One Tulare farm had more than 30,000 tricolored birds. The birds all successfully fledged by the end of May.

In order to be considered eligible for financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program, the applicant must have a vested interest in production agricultural and meet other program eligibility requirements.

This initiative is being coordinated through a partnership effort with Audubon California, and has the support of Valley ag organizations.

Tricolored blackbirds (Photo by Kelly Weintraub, Natural Resources Conservation Service, California)

"Western United Dairymen members have once again partnered with NRCS and Audubon California to protect the tricolored blackbird," said Paul Sousa, environmental director for Western United Dairymen. "This shows our members' commitment to a sustainable ecosystem on and around their farms. This voluntary program benefits all parties as conservation is achieved in a way that allows farms to continue to be productive."

The conservation organizations are working toward a long-term plan to eventually provide alternative nesting sites to the tricolored blackbirds that would be preferable to the farmers' fields.

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service helps America's farmers and ranchers conserve the nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment. More information is available at www.ca.nrcs.usda.gov.

EARTH DAY: 22 APRIL

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The information in this report is deemed to be reliable, but cannot be guaranteed. This condition applies generally throughout the report and specifically to square footage calculations.

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Connecting Students & Careers

CRAIG WHEATON, ED.D.

Visalia Unified School District is constantly growing and changing to better meet the needs of our students. If you read the VUSD column each month, you know that we are implementing new, more rigorous standards known as the Common Core State Standards. These standards are designed to better prepare our students to compete in a world economy.

Craig Wheaton

The Common Core Standards will prepare students to leave VUSD "college and career" ready. We know that not all students want to or need to attend college. There are many occupations that may only require technical training and not a college degree. Our goal is to prepare students to make choices that will keep all of their doors open--whether that is a college degree, a technical certification course, or an immediate job in the workforce. No matter the choice, we want VUSD graduates prepared to enter college without remediation courses or to enter the workforce prepared for advancement on a career path.

Too often we find that students enter high school with only a vague idea of what they may need in order to be prepared for college and career. Also, far too often, students are not thinking about much of anything beyond high school; and as a result of not being focused, they are not taking their current educational opportunities seriously.

Adolescence is a difficult stage in life, and the public school system must take on the responsibility of motivating students by providing rigorous and relevant pathways to a successful future. It isn't enough to establish a college preparation course sequence and to say we have done our job. Likewise, it won't do any good to say we have many traditional vocational courses that could prepare students for a vocational skill. We need to take on the responsibility of supporting and motivating our students by providing comprehensive career pathways that connect students to a variety of career options.

So, what are we doing in Visalia Unified to meet the needs of our students? I think you will see many changes over the next two years. In August, we are beginning two new magnet pathways or academies. The first is a Health Careers Pathway at Mt. Whitney High School, and the second is an Agricultural Engineering pathway at Golden West High School. Students will move in a "cohort" for academic and technical courses that are themed around the industry pathway. A core team of teachers will work with students through their academic courses using project-based learning that will make the curriculum relevant through real world applications. We are developing partnerships with local businesses and industries to provide work-based learning opportunities to immerse students in the "adult world" of work.

This is only the beginning! By the next school year, August 2015, entering ninth-grade students will have several choices throughout the high schools in our district. We plan to kickoff that year with seven career academies, one at each of the four high schools (Redwood, Mt. Whitney, Golden West and El Diamante) and three at Visalia Technical Early College High School (VTEC).

In Visalia Unified, we are constantly working to better serve the students in our community. Big plans are underway, and big changes are coming!

Craig Wheaton, Ed.D., is superintendent of the Visalia Unified School District.

NEXT DEADLINE:

THURSDAY, APRIL 24, 2014

The Tax Dilemma

JACK PAYDEN-TRAVERS

Yesterday, I got my taxes off to the IRS and felt like a weight had been lifted from my shoulders. You know the feeling, don't you? Another year and somehow we managed to survive. Other than the car and the house which both belong to the bank for the next few years, the bills have been paid. Well not all the bills. Actually there is one left. It's the $10.40 cents that I refused to pay of the "Taxes Owed" to the IRS.

This year, the "Taxes Owed" came to a whopping $15.00 and so I wrote a check to the United States Treasury for $4.60. As I have every April since 1973 when my wife and I started filing our taxes together, we enclosed a polite note to our "Dear IRS Worker" informing her or him of our decision to withhold a symbolic portion of our income tax in protest as Christian pacifists to the military madness infecting our federal budget.

How else can one explain the fact that the majority of our federal tax dollars are still paying to support present and past wars? Can you believe that the treasury still needs to send checks each month to two survivors of Civil War veterans? 149 years later, and we are still paying for the decision to settle that conflict by force of arms rather than seek non-military solutions to internal and international conflicts. There has got to be a better way to settle disputes.

How strange is it to us today to think of settling personal disputes by dueling with the intention of killing our opponent? And yet this is exactly what I hear proposed as soon as an international conflict arises. For some reason, honor rather than reason, emotion rather than sanity, takes hold and the drums of war start to beat. The kill, kill, kill of bayonet training becomes the fall back option and Dr. Strangelove rides again. Oh, you think Ukraine is different from Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran, Uganda, Columbia? The list goes on.

During the Vietnam War, my wife and I both came to an understanding of our Christian faith as one of nonviolence and thus a rejection of war. I actually chose to refuse induction and face a sentence of five years in prison and a fine of $10,000 rather than join the military. And yet each year in April, we are faced with the decision to either pay for war and deny our Christian faith or to participate in war-making by paying our entire tax bill.

We choose to affirm our religious beliefs and to resist the payment of our taxes owed by withholding a symbolic amount. And what is more symbolic of the tax dollar than the Form 1040? And so we withhold the symbolic amount of $10.40 from whatever we owe and send it to a group that works for peace.

We know, of course, that the IRS may eventually collect this amount along with interest and penalty from our bank or wages or more likely a tax refund. That is a price we are willing to pay for the sake of conscience. We know that we are not alone in our quest to live according to our religious principles. In fact "$10.40 For Peace" is a group that encourages conscientious reflection about the payment of taxes that support war. They host a website, www.1040forpeace.com, to assist people wrestling with this question.

One option that I hope everyone will consider is to support the right of conscientious objection to the payment of war taxes through passage of the Religious Freedom Peace Tax Fund Act of the 113th United States Congress. HR 2483 is a bill that would extend the right of conscientious objection to U.S. taxpayers. Introduced each session by civil rights Congressman John Lewis, this bill would create a Peace Tax Fund in the U.S. Treasury into which those opposed to war would pay 100 percent of their taxes. It could not be used to fund the Pentagon, nuclear weapons produced by the Department of Energy, Military Aide to foreign nations, national security, etc. You can join the National Campaign for a Peace Tax Fund, which lobbies for passage of this bill, by going to www.peacetaxfund.org.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Prosecuted for Protecting

One year ago, on this date, I was acquitted on 6 counts of violating a visitation order and 6 additional counts of child deprivation/concealment. The jury found me NOT GUILTY on all 12 counts. This all came about from a local law enforcement agency(which will remain nameless, due to a civil action) and the Tulare County District Attorney's Office, for protecting my child from further abuse.

In July of 2012, as a police officer(mandated reporter) and mother, I reported my child's abuse to a local law enforcement agency, which handled the cases "inappropriately", to say the least. Instead, I became the focus of the investigation for not allowing my child visitation with his abuser, until it could get investigated. I was refused protection for my child, so my only option was to keep him safe to avoid further abuse. If I had sent my child to the abuser, I could have been charged with failing to protect/child endangerment.

Having served as a law enforcement officer and a detective in the County of Tulare, for nearly 15 years, I was in complete and utter shock at what this was turning into and my child that became invisible to the District Attorney's Office, under the D.A. Tim Ward. I did not expect preferential treatment. The only thing I expected was fairness and justice for my child.

My case was not sent out to another county, like we've heard started recently. My case was not "rejected" outright, like we've heard of recently. My case was prosecuted, I feel, maliciously. I was held to a very high standard during my career and took my duties to serve and protect seriously. I was given the authority to protect the children in our community, but was not allowed the same right as any other citizen in my position under Marsy's Law Victim's Rights...protection for my child. In fact, I was punished for it. When I was initially charged with the 6 counts of violating a visitation order I thought, under the circumstances, the case would've been rejected because I had attempted several times to get an emergency protection order and/or a temporary restraining order. To my surprise, I found out through my attorney the Tulare County District Attorney's Office doubled-down on my initial charges by adding 6 child deprivation/concealment charges. I had never heard of that happening in the 15 years as a police officer or as a detective, unless a parent or family member fled to an undisclosed location with the child and concealed the child's whereabouts. I realized quickly what was going on and it was very ugly. (Due to civil action against a local government agency, I cannot disclose further).

Once I was found not guilty and acquitted on all 12 counts, and quite frankly put through a parent's living hell, I contacted D.A. Tim Ward himself. I pleaded for him to review my child's abuse cases and use the abuser's own testimony and evidence to prosecute him. I was telephoned later by Ward's "messenger" advising me they didn't think or believe they could get a conviction. I was appalled. I was disappointed. I was disgusted.

My little boy did not get the protection or the justice he so deserved. I not only speak out for my child, but for others. THIS IS NOT JUSTICE. This is just wrong, on so many levels. THE PUBLIC HAS A RIGHT TO KNOW WHAT REALLY HAPPENS BEHIND THE SCENES.

How would you feel if it were your child or the child of a loved one?

Jennifer Salmon

In Support of Kaelble

I worked with Ralph Kaelble and Tim Ward in the District Attorney's Office from 1999 to 2010 (the year I retired). I would like to tell you why I think Ralph Kaelble is the best man for the job of Tulare County District Attorney. He is an excellent attorney and a very capable supervisor of other attorneys.

Ralph is a person who is easy to talk to, and is able to interview victims and witnesses in a very comforting way. I found Ralph easy to work with, and if any problems in the office came up, he was always one of the first people I would go to for advice. He is very easy to talk to and he is a very caring person.

Dianne Pyle

Re: Candidates' Forum

Mr. Pastis,

I am very much concerned about the way you reported from the "Candidates Forum" for the two Sheriff candidates on Wednesday 26th of April in front of our Rotary Club!

I think it would have been more honest of you to choose a title: "Vote for Boudreaux – I do not like Whaley!"

To put a photo up front on the article showing Mr. Boudreaux active and "Whaley looks at him….." is a well-known psychological trick of journalists who should be neutral in their comments when they want to support one candidate! The primitive time to show just a bad photo of someone who you do not like is over. You chose the more sophisticated way but it is the same effect.

I know and Mr. Whaley stated this as well but with less show effect than Mr. Boudreaux, that his top priority is, how should and how can it be different, to provide a safe community. That is the main purpose why we need law enforcement and it is so unimportant as to say we need air to breath!

But the other top priority is to provide this safe community in a manner that the citizens can be sure that their sheriff and his officers are not acting unconstitutional in putting themselves above the law! It is a bad action by a law enforcement officer or a Sheriff trying to make it looking ridiculous when he has put himself above the law. And you supported that effort of Mr. Boudreaux when you showed his Quote in an extra box within the text on page 8! No action of wrong doing by a law enforcement institution or officer can be little enough to be ignored and not seriously criticized if it tries to put itself or himself above the law! And that happens unfortunately not only with the gun raffle but also what we could see on the roads when officers in uniform and with sheriff cars put up signs for Mr. Boudreaux! We were also told by acquaintances that officers were knocking on doors asking if they could put up signs for Mr. Boudreaux's campaign. I couldn't swear on this because I was not a witness but it matches with the other occurrences.

I still think that we have enough good and law respecting law enforcement officers and that we can still trust the majority of them, but officer involved shootings with unarmed men, out of control men hunts endangering innocent citizens accidentally hit, rude way of arrests of people who have not be convicted yet and have to be taken as innocent and so on, and so on…… I fear that more than any gang activities because if it hits you as a loyal citizen you cannot defend yourself and that makes me goose bumps whenever I am thinking about!

Law enforcement officers and officials should give a firm and good example when it comes to obey the law. They shouldn't bend it the way how it fits their opinion or covers their activities!

I know that my open statement could be risky for me but I had to write it, helping with my little influence to provide a safer community, safe from that ugly face of wrong doings by the law enforcement!

R. Michael Schauffele

Response: *Your assessment of my motivations was much more interesting than the truth. -- Steve Pastis*

Black Tie

ALEX OLDENBOURG

VETERAN'S CORNER

Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment Program Offered

JOE WRIGHT

The Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (VR&E) Program is sometimes referred to as the Chapter 31 program. The program assists veterans with service-connected disabilities to prepare for, find and keep suitable jobs. For veterans with service-connected disabilities so severe that they cannot immediately consider work, the program offers services to improve their ability to live as independently as possible.

Services that may be provided by the VR&E Program include comprehensive rehabilitation evaluation, vocational counseling and rehabilitation planning, job-training, job-seeking skills, resume development, assistance finding and keeping a job including the use of special employer incentives and job accommodations, post-secondary training at a college, vocational, technical or business school, and independent living services for veterans unable to work due to the severity of their disabilities.

Active duty service members are eligible if they expect to receive an honorable discharge upon separation from active duty. Veterans are eligible if they have received, or will receive, a discharge that is other than dishonorable, and have a service-connected disability rating of at least 10%, or a memorandum rating of 20% or more from the VA. Active duty and veterans must apply for this benefit.

The basic period of eligibility in which VR&E services may be used is 12 years from the date of separation from active military service, or the date the veteran was first notified by VA of a service-connected disability rating. The basic period of eligibility may be extended if a vocational rehabilitation counselor determines that a veteran has a serious employment handicap.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran ID cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. You can get information on the Web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the veterans service officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd., Hanford, CA 93230; call 852-

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Porterville Iris Festival to Celebrate City Flower, Salute Military on April 26th

Porterville's annual Iris Festival, which will be held on Saturday, April 26, will bring back and expand popular activities, as well as feature new offerings. Now in its 16th year, the event has grown from a mere 2,000 attendees to the well over 20,000 residents and visitors expected in downtown Porterville.

Porterville's city flower, the iris.

The Iris Festival has become not only a premier event for Porterville, but also Central California. The community, Porterville Chamber of Commerce and presenting sponsors Eagle Mountain Casino, the Tule River Tribal Council and the Tule River EDC will welcome visitors from throughout the state and the western U.S. for a day filled with family activity.

This year, the organizing committee introduces a "Salute to Military." This new feature will take place at the southern end of the Main Street festival and feature military vehicles, displays and information booths. Patriotic music will fill the air.

Returning from the 2013 event will be the much-anticipated Festival of Colors Run/Walk, now presented by Enspirit, Inc. Last year, this colorful and fun activity had over 300 participants and it is expected to grow in 2014. The antiques and collectibles peddler's fair was another popular new addition and it also returns.

Happening on Main Street in Downtown Porterville, the Iris Festival operates from 9am to 5pm, and will host over 200 crafter, food, vendor, business and information booths. Free entertainment will perform on the Family HealthCare Network Stage in Centennial Park and on the Mill Street stage. The Sierra View District Hospital Kids Zone will include amusements, chalk art, face painting and more. Many special merchant promotions will take place as well.

Rounding out the day's activities will

Continued on p. 22 »

Agri-Center to Host Annual Antique Equipment Show April 25-27

The International Agri-Center will host the 22nd Annual California Antique Farm Equipment Show, April 25-27 in Tulare. The event will showcase the agriculture industry's heritage, with a focus on antique dairy equipment this year. Hundreds of antique trucks, tractors and equipment will be on display, along with entertainment, demonstrations and fun for the whole family.

Children can play in the kids' area and shoppers can explore "Antiques & Boutiques" for clothing, home goods, jewelry and more.

The antique equipment parade will begin on Saturday and Sunday at 9:30am. The parade will feature hundreds of antique trucks and tractors driving down Median Street.

For serious antique equipment enthusiasts, hundreds of antique trucks, tractors, engines and farm equipment will be on display during the three-day show. Antique earthmovers will be in action, digging in the tractor exposition area, and there will be more than 150 swap meet booths for iron works, antiques and woodcrafts.

Other highlights include a barbecued steak dinner with entertainment by the "Billies Band" on Saturday evening and a pancake breakfast and non-denominational worship service on Sunday morning.

For a full schedule of events, visit www.AntiqueFarmShow.org.

Hundreds of antique trucks, tractors, engines and farm equipment will be on display during the show.

The Tulare County Renaissance Festival will include jousting by the Knights of Mayhem.

Guild of St. Mortimer to Present the 25th Annual Tulare County Renaissance Festival

STAFF REPORTS

The Guild of St. Mortimer will host the 25th Annual Tulare County Renaissance Festival in Plaza Park in Visalia on May 3-4.

Highlights will include: jousting by the Knights of Mayhem; live performances by George the Giant; live performances by The Duelist; a sampling of the Highland Games; entertainment on two performance stages; food, such as wood fire pizza from the Dragon Wagon; vendors offering all types of goods, such as jewelry, clothing and handcrafted items; and historical reenactments of the Queen's Court, including a special Children's Court.

George the Giant, who stands an impressive 7'3", is one of the most complete sideshow performers today. He appeared as Colossus in Tim Burton's movie "Big Fish," as well as in "Tough Luck," "Firecracker" and "Relative Strangers." His many television appearances include "The Tonight Show," "Touched by an Angel", "The Guardian," "The Strip" and "According to Jim."

For more information – or to volunteer for the event – visit the contact page at www.stmortimer.org or email Pat Rule at mythnmagic@yahoo.com.

The Great Western Fan Festival offers three days of music.

Great Western Fan Festival to Showcase Southern Gospel Music

Take some great hymns of the church, add a pinch of toe-tappin' spirituals with a splash of hand-clappin' bluegrass and presto! – you have what is called Southern Gospel Music.

Over the years, this unique sound has exploded into a musical style that has captured the hearts of fans around the globe. From its rich four-part harmonies to its upbeat expressions of joy, Southern Gospel Music has become a life-changing experience, and now Great Western Fan Festival, the biggest Southern Gospel Music event on the West Coast, is coming to Visalia from Thursday, May 1, through Saturday, May 3.

For three days, the Visalia Convention Center will feature music by Triumphant Quartet, Greater Vision, Liberty, The Hoppers, The Martins, Signature Sound, Legacy Five and other groups from the West Coast. Several of these artists have been honored with multiple Dove, Grammy and Fan Awards, as well as Hall of Fame inductions in the Christian and Country Music fields.

Afternoon showcases will include: "Best of the West," "Songs and Hymns You Love," "They Write the Songs," "Funniest Stories Ever Told," "Parade of Pianos" and "Person to Person." Each evening will feature five "non-stop" hours of the finest in gospel music. The evening concerts are preceded by a relaxed "courtyard concert" during an outdoor supper.

For additional information and reserved seating, visit www.fanfestivals.com or call (800) 965-9324.

The Mighty Oak Chorus

'Harmony on Broadway' Comes to Visalia May 3rd

"Harmony On Broadway" is coming to Visalia on Saturday, May 3, with a 2pm matinee show and a 7:30pm evening show, both at the Central Valley Christian High School Theater in Visalia. This musical presentation will feature popular songs from famous Broadway shows including "Oklahoma!," "Les Miserables," "The Music Man," "Phantom of the Opera," "Fiddler on the Roof," "Paint Your Wagon," "West Side Story" and more.

The award-winning combined choruses from Visalia's "Mighty Oak Chorus" and Fresno's "GNC A Capella Chorus," along with four featured quartets, will perform hits such as "Bring Him Home," "They Call the Wind Mariah," "Oklahoma!," "Seventy-Six Trombones," "Somewhere," "Music of the Night," "If I Were a Rich Man" and "Over The Rainbow." As an added attraction, a College of the Sequoias music ensemble will perform as special guests.

The 650-seat state-of-the-art theater is located on the Central Valley High School campus in Visalia at 5600 W. Tulare Ave., just west of Akers. Tickets for both shows are priced at $16 for adults, and $8 for children 12 and under. Advance tickets may be ordered by calling Bud Case at 901-4615 or by emailing info@visaliamightyoakchorus.org.

"Harmony On Broadway" is the 33rd consecutive show in this annual series presented by the Visalia Mighty Oak Chorus, with its major sponsors: A&W Restaurants, ServiceMaster by Benevento, Iron Horse Design, Redwood Springs Health Care and Village Printer.

The Mighty Oak Chorus was formed 33 years ago by the Visalia Unified School District Adult School, with members coming from cities throughout Tulare and Kings counties. The Mighty Oak Chorus is affiliated with

Continued on p. 24 »

'Baskets and Gourds: Containers of Our Culture V' Set for April 26-27

Whether you are a beginner or an accomplished artist, you are welcome to take basket and gourd classes at the Visalia Elks Lodge on April 26 and 27. More than 20 teachers are coming from across the country to teach classes on Saturday and Sunday.

The weekend begins with a meet-and-greet reception at Arts Visalia on April 25 from 6-8pm. The show will feature a variety of baskets and gourds created by the teachers using many different materials with their own unique styles. Additional artwork will be available at the Teachers Marketplace from 4:30-5:30 on Saturday afternoon, with appetizers and a no-host bar.

A basket weaved by keynote speaker Flo Hoppe.

Featured artists include Marilyn Moore with intricate wire baskets, Maria Dellos with her gourd ink techniques, Gloria Crane with a gourd ginger jar, and Don Weeke returning to share his gourd masks and four different weaving techniques.

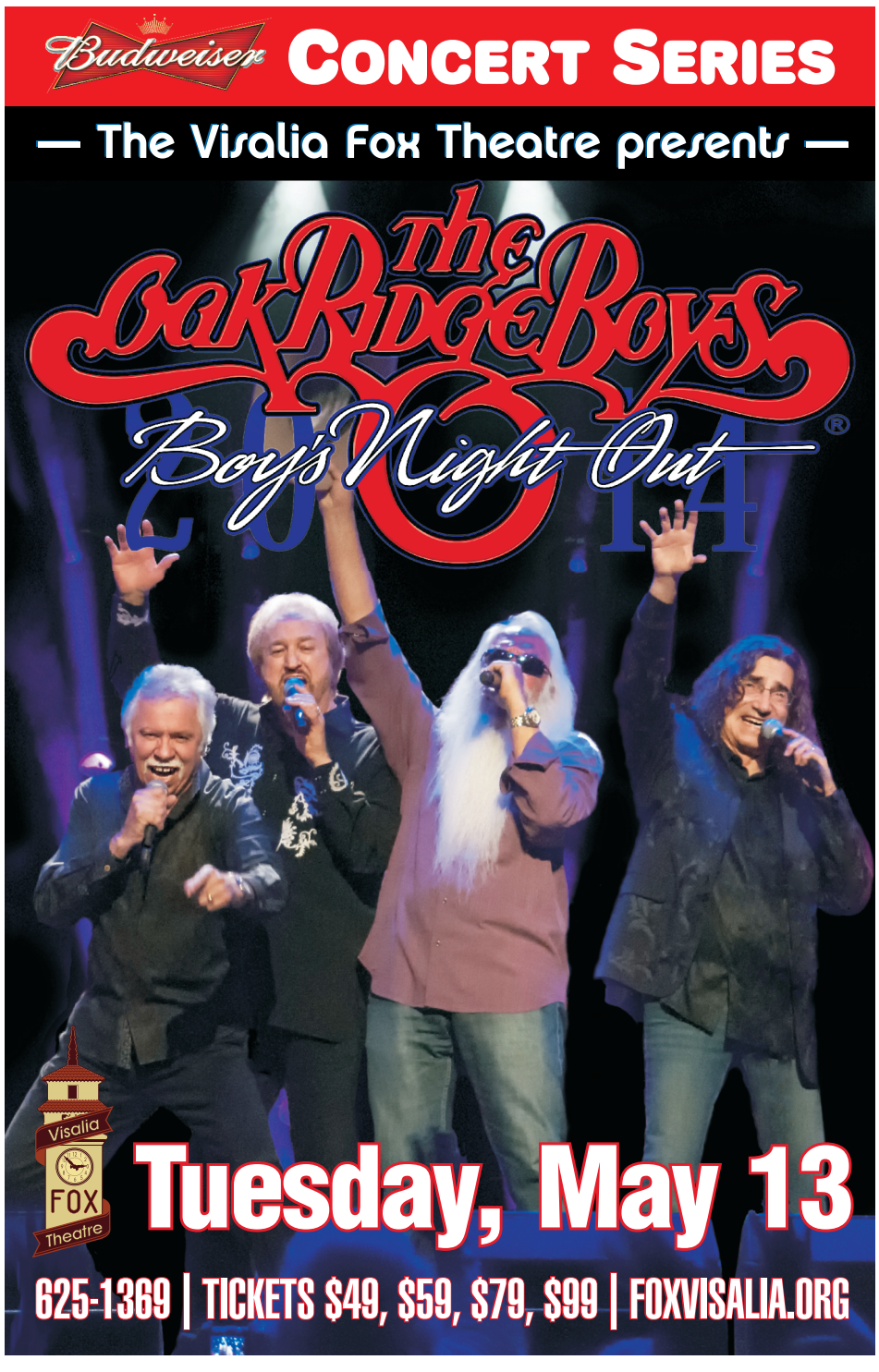
Keynote speaker Flo Hoppe is a renowned weaver and author from Syracuse, New York, who has been teaching since the 1970s. She will share her passion for using natural fibers during the banquet on Saturday night.

Local artists Toni Best, Sam McKinney and Linda Victory will also teach classes during the weekend using pine needles, beads and watercolors on gourds. Other California artists include Vickie Echols, Audrey Fontaine and Sue Kamin.

Exhibitors with booths on the lawn will include the California Gourd Society, Handweavers of the Valley, Sam McKinney (local gourd grower) and more.

For more information, including a list of classes and information about the artists, is at www.calgourds.com/events.

NEXT DEADLINE: 24 APRIL 2014



Music at the Main to Present Jazz-Classical Crossover Show on April 20

STAFF REPORTS

Nigel Armstrong

For those who love both classical and jazz, Music at the Main's 3pm presentation on Sunday, April 20, at the Main Street Theatre in Visalia will draw on the best of both traditions. In an exciting crossover, one of the North America's finest young classical violinists, Nigel Armstrong, teams with one of Southern California's most dynamic jazz pianists, Ross Garren, in a special concert.

Some of the pieces will be straight jazz, including old favorites like "Autumn Leaves." Jazz piano legend Bill Evans will be well represented, with deeply felt interpretations of "Emily" and "Time Remembered." John Coltrane favorites highlight the show, too. Armstrong's acrobatic violin will perform Coltrane's saxophone parts.

And if you've never heard a jazz improvisation of Bach, well, this is your chance. That Bach's themes and motifs stand up so well to jazz interpretation says much about the composer, and much about the depth and meaning of jazz.

Armstrong has his roots deep in the Colburn School and the Curtis Institute of Music, two of the foremost conservatories. He has performed all over the world – the Glazunov and Shostakovich Halls in St. Petersburg, Russia; the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires, Argentina; the National Theaters of Costa Rica and Guatemala; and Salle Gaveau in Paris. Jeffrey Kahane of the *L.A. Times* described him as a violinist "with technique to burn... but to find that depth of musicianship in a young person is very unusual."

Armstrong also enjoys playing music outside the classical repertoire. In 2011, he worked with Diego Schissi and Juan Pablo Navarro to put on jazz-tango-classical recitals throughout Argentina, and now is coming to our area with his jazz-classical crossover concert.

Ross Garren

On piano, Garren may soon be a household name. Already, he has performed with B.B. King, Dee Dee Bridgewater, Kenny Burrell, James Cotton, Charlie Musselwhite, Lee Oskar, David Binney and Vardan Ovsepian. He is also a harmonicist and composer. He graduated from USC where he was named "Outstanding Graduate in Composition" and was named a Discovery Scholar.

Both jazz and classical music will survive independently for a very long time, mostly because they speak to something fundamental about what it means to be alive and human. That said, both stand to benefit tremendously from a much closer relationship than they have had in the past.

Children and an accompanying adult admitted free, thanks to a generous sponsorship from Larry Klingman and Joella West.

Pillar Point, Soft Swells to Play Cellar Door on May 3rd

STAFF REPORTS

Wrapped in vintage synthesizers, drum kits and dark slinking bass lines, Seattle's Pillar Point – which will perform an 8pm show at The Cellar Door on Saturday, May 3 – pulses with an organic heartbeat beneath a warm, analog fabric. The vocals appear like an unhinged Ray Davies urging you to come dance.

Los Angeles tour partners and opening act, Soft Swells, have also been gaining quite a bit of steam. *Time Magazine* included Soft Swells in a list of "Five Buzz-Worthy Bands to Check Out." *USA Today* said, "Upbeat and very full-sounding tunes. While one minute the guys sound like a catchy pop outfit, the next you'll hear them incorporating electronic sounds."

Tickets for the 21+ show are $7 and available at Ticketweb.com.

Pillar Point

MUSIC

April

April 18 – White Glove Service – 9:30pm
White Glove Service will perform at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. For information, visit cellardoor101.com.

April 20 – Nigel Armstrong – 3pm
A Night of Jazz will feature violinist Nigel Armstrong at the Main Street Theatre. For information and tickets, visit threeriversperformingarts.org.

April 25 – Legends of R&B – 8pm
Eagle Mountain Casino presents Legends of R&B Midnight Star, Rose Royce, Club Nouveau and Honey Cone. General admission is $35. For information, visit http://eaglemtncasino.com.

April 25 – Run4Cover – 9pm
Run4Cover will perform at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. For information, visit cellardoor101.com.

April 27 – Marble Fork Band – 4-8pm
Marble Fork Band will perform at the River View Restaurant, 42323 Sierra Dr., Three Rivers. No cover charge.

May

May 1-3 – Great Western Fan Festival
The Great Western Fan Festival is the largest Christian Music Event of its kind west of the Rockies. Some of the performers include The Browns, Ernie Haase & Signature Sound, Greater Vision, The Hoppers and Triumphant Quartet. Held at the Visalia Convention Center, evening concerts are from 6-10:30pm. Afternoon Showcases Friday and Saturday are from 11:30am-4pm. For information go to FanFestivals.com. For tickets, call (800) 965-9324.

May 1 – 3's A Crowd – 7-10 pm
On Thursdays, 3's A Crowd performs at Crawdaddys Visalia, 333 E. Main St. For information, visit CrawdaddysVisalia.com.

May 9 – Marble Fork Band – 6:30-8:30pm
The Marble Fork Band performs at Cafe 210 on the second Friday of each month. The ensemble offers original music featuring a Chapman Stick 10-string instrument, acoustic guitar and percussion. Cafe 210 is located at 210 W. Center, Visalia. For information, visit 210life.com.

May 9 – Motel Drive – 9:30pm
Motel Drive will perform at The Cellar Door, 101 W. Main St., Visalia. For information, visit cellardoor101.com.

May 10 – COS Season Finale Choral Concert "Baroque to Broadway – 7:30pm
The College of the Sequoias Vocal Music Department will present its final concert at the COS Theater, 915 S. Mooney Blvd. Tickets are $10 general admission and $8 for students and seniors. For tickets call 730-3907.

May 10 – Johnny Cash Tribute – 7:30pm
A Johnny Cash tribute featuring James Garner take the stage of The Lindsay Community Theater, 190 N. Elmwood Ave. For information, visit lindsaycommunitytheater.com.

May 13 – The Oak Ridge Boys – 7:30pm
Budweiser Concert Series and the Visalia Fox Theatre present The Oak Ridge Boys at the Visalia Fox Theatre, 300 W. Main St. For information, visit foxvisalia.com.

May 16 – Sourdough Slim and his Saddle Pals – 7pm
Sourdough Slim will bring back his musical art and zany, dead-pan humor to the Mavericks Coffee House. He will also be joined by the Saddle Pals. Tickets, $25, are available at Mavericks Coffee House, 238 E. Caldwell, Visalia or by calling 624-1400.

May 18 – One Love: A Family Music Festival–11am-3pm
Exeter's Trinity Lutheran Church hosts its 1st annual family reggae/worship music festival. One Love is a family-friendly event open to the community at large that features food and music. An outdoor stage will be set up featuring Club Paradise, a local act that plays a mix of reggae standards and hymns. The event is free. There is a playground for children adjacent to the stage and booths will be set up for food and crafts. People are encouraged to bring chairs or blankets for the lawn. TLC is located at 420 Sequoia Dr., Exeter. For information, visit tlcexeter.com.

May 21 – Jugfest 2014 – 1pm
106-7 K-Jug Country and Budweiser will present Jugfest 2014 at Plaza Park staring Justin Moore and featuring daytime acoustic shows with Collin Raye, Frankie Ballard, Jamie Lynn Spears and John King. The event is free. For details visit kjug.com/jugfest_2014.

May 24 – Brenn Hill – 7pm
Brenn Hill will perform at Mavericks Coffee House, 238 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia. For information, visit mavericksccoffeehouse.com.

June

June 7 – Belinda Gail – 7pm
Belinda Gail will perform at Mavericks Coffee House, 238 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia. For information, visit mavericksccoffeehouse.com.

September

Sept. 5 – R.W. Hampton – 7pm
R.W. Hampton will perform at Mavericks Coffee House, 238 E, Caldwell Ave., Visalia. For information, visit mavericksccoffeehouse.com.

Sept. 11 – Waddie Mitchell – 7pm
Waddie Mitchell will perform at Mavericks Coffee House, 238 E. Caldwell Ave., Visalia. For information, visit mavericksccoffeehouse.com.

EVENTS

April

April 18 – Lunch 'n' Learn – 12-1:30pm
The Professional Latin American Association will hold a presentation on "Leading Change" as part of its Lunch 'n' Learn Leadership Development Series. The event is held at the KCAO Main Office, 1130 N. 11th Ave., Hanford. Attendees will receive a certificate of completion from the office of Assemblyman Rudy Salas and the Professional Latin American Association. To reserve a seat, email plaakings@yahoo.com or call Carol Hernandez at 482-7515.

April 18-19 – A&W Cruise Nights
Show off your rides at A&W Cruise Nights. On April 18, the event will be at the A&W in Exeter and on April 19 at A&W in downtown Visalia

April 19 – 9th Annual Eggstravaganza – 10am
Visalia Parks and Recreation will present its annual Easter egg hunt with games, activities and an opportunity to meet the bunny himself. The event will be held at Riverway Sports Park's CR Shannon Baseball Complex. Register for the event at liveandplayvisalia.com.

April 20 – Kiwanis Club Easter Pancake Breakfast – 7-10am
The Exeter Kiwanis will hold its pancake breakfast in the Exeter Memorial Building. Tickets are $5 and can be purchased at the Exeter Chamber or at the door.

April 22 – Denny's Grand Opening and Ribbon Cutting – 10am
The Hanford Chamber of Commerce will hold a Grand Opening and Ribbon-Cutting to welcome Denny's at 1635 Glendale Ave. For information, call 582-0483.

April 23 – Visalia Chamber Business Impact Seminar – 7:30-10am
The Visalia Chamber and Pacific Employers have teamed up to provide required sexual harassment training once a quarter. The seminar will be held at Lamp Liter Restaurant. Reservations are required. For information, call 734-5876.

April 23 – Lunch for a Cause – 11am
Lunch for a Cause will be held at Hometown Emporium in Exeter for $10. Proceeds go to Relay for Life. Lunch will be served until sold out. Preorder by calling 592-1250.

April 23 – Administrative Professionals Fashion Show and Lunch – 11:30am-1:30pm
Hanford Chamber of Commerce invites Valley businesses to treat their secretaries and other administrative professionals to lunch and a fashion show at the Hanford Civic Auditorium. The event is hosted by the chamber and the Kiwanis Club of Hanford. Proceeds support Kings County Youth Programs and scholarships. Tickets are $30. For information, call 592-0483.

April 23 – An Evening With Ralph F. Kaelble for DA – 5:30–8:30pm
Troy and Janette Korsgaden are hosting a reception to support the election of Ralph F. Kaelble for Tulare County District Attorney. The event will be held at the private residence at Crawdaddy's Restaurant, 333 E. Main St., Visalia. Tickets are $125 and can be purchased at www.RFKforDA.com.

April 24-May 1 – AAUW Springtime Book Sale
AAUW will hold its spring fundraiser in the Sequoia Mall in Visalia. Hours are Monday through Friday 10am-8:30pm; Saturday 10am-7pm; and Sunday 11am-6pm. The money raised goes toward scholarships. For information, call 734-4911.

April 24 – Exeter Meats & Processing Ribbon Cutting – 10am
Exeter Chamber of Commerce welcomes Exeter Meats & Processing at 140 E. Palm.

April 24 – Getting to Know – 6:30pm
The fourth program in the Tulare County Library's "Getting to Know…" series will feature Stan Carrizosa, College of the Sequoias president. This event held at the Visalia Library is free. For information, call 713-2703.

April 25 – Scott Smith Invitational – 7:30am
Visalia Firefighters Association Local 3719 will host the Scott Smith Memorial Invitational Golf Tournament in honor of the late Visalia Fire Captain Scott Smith. Funds raised go toward the Visalia Rescue Mission. For information, call 679-1457.

April 25 – Administrative Professional Awards Luncheon
The Corcoran Chamber of Commerce will name the recipient of the 2013 Administrative Professional of the Year Award at the luncheon. A catered lunch and fashion show are also featured. For information, call 992-4514.

April 25-27 – California Antique Farm Equipment Show
The show will feature Antiques & Boutiques, Antique Tractor Pulling Exhibition, Barnyard Olympics, Cow Plop Bingo, Dairy Dash 5K, Dutch Oven & Rib Cook Off, Kids' Area, Swap Meet and Tractor Parade. It will be held at the International Agri-Center from 8am-5 on Friday and Saturday and from 8am-3pm on Sunday. Admission is $5, children 12 and under free. For information, visit antiquefarmshow.org.

April 25 – Verne Brasel Classic
West Coast Sprint Car Race will be held at Kings Speedway in Hanford. For information, visit usacracing.com.

April 26 – Porterville Iris Festival – 9am-5pm
The Iris Festival is a celebration of Porterville in Bloom with activities occurring in downtown Porterville, Centennial Park and Sutton's Iris Gardens, located a short distance from downtown. Free Shuttle Service is provided between locations. Featured events include a chili cook-off, vendors, tours, entertainment, Sierra View District Hospital Kids Zone, car show and more. For information, visit irisfesti-

VENT CALENDAR

val.porterville.com.

April 26 – EUHS AG Boosters BBQ
Exeter Union High School AG Boosters will host their annual Fundraising BBQ at Elam Ranch, 1499 W. Chestnut. The evening includes dinner, raffles, live dessert auction and no host bar. Tickets are $25 and are available by contact the Ag Department 592-2449.

April 26 – SPCA 23rd Annual Walk A Dog A Thon
Valley Oak SPCA will hold a Dog A Thon at Plaza Park in Visalia. The event features a 3-mile walk, blessing of the animals, vendors, raffle and canine contest. Entry fee is $25. Prizes will be given for the top fundraiser in youth, teen adult, senior and team categories. Registration forms and information is available at vospca.org.

April 26 – Woodlake Rotary Golf Tournament – 10am
Woodlake Rotary's Annual Golf Tournament will be held at Valley Oaks Golf Course. Prizes, food and sponsorship opportunities featured. Player fees are $100. Team packages are $500. Sign up before April 14 for a discount. Contact Drew Sorensen, 564-8081 ext. 202, or Bobbie Foster, 561-4140.

April 26 – 32nd Annual Arbor Day Celebration – 8:30am-12pm
The City of Visalia Parks & Urban Forestry Division will observe Arbor Day with tree planting by volunteers. For information contact the Urban Forestry Division office at 713-4384.

April 26 – Garden & Ranch Supply Ribbon Cutting – 10:30am
The Lindsay Chamber of Commerce will hold a ribbon-cutting for Garden & Ranch Supply at 419 W. Hermosa St. For information, call 462-2000.

April 26 – Fashion Show and Luncheon – 11am
Kaweah Delta Health Care District Guild will present Stepping Out In Style, an annual fashion show and luncheon at the Lamp Liter Inn. Admission is $30. Proceeds go to buy patient care equipment. Reserve seats by April 19. For information, call 635-9225.

April 27 – 2nd Annual Mind Body Spirit Day – 10am-6pm
Cosmic Corral will host a day of lectures and presentations at 209 N. Irwin St., Hanford. The event is free. Presentation topics include Sacred Aztec Calendar, Vibrational Healing, Infinite Love and Gratitude, 11th Hour Paranormal Presentation, Afterlife Communication, Create Your Way to Self-Discovery, Gallery Readings, and What is Divination? For reservations and information, visit facebook.com/pages/Cosmic-Corral.

April 27 – EUHS Alumni of the Year Banquet – 5-9pm
Exeter Union High School Alumni will honor George McEwen, class of 1965. Tickets are $45 or $320 for a table of 8. All proceeds fund Alumni Student Scholarships. RSVP by April 19. Contact David Nielsen for information at davidn@nielseninsurance.net.

April 29 – Document Shredding Campaign – 9am-12pm
Central Valley Community Bank will offer free document shredding. A limit of 6 banker boxes per person or business. For information, call 594-9919.

May

May 1 – Beauty and the Beast – 6pm
In Sync Productions, Inc. presents Muay Thai Kickboxing at Tachi Palace. Tickets, $30, $40, $60, $100, are on sale at tachipalace.com.

May 2 – Porterville Chamber First Friday Coffee – 7am
Enjoy the aroma of higher profits with the Porterville Chamber featuring breakfast, networking and business information at the Galaxy 9 Theatre, 631 N. Indiana. For Information, visit portervillechamber.org.

May 2 – Cinco De Mayo – 5:30-8pm
Margaritas, music, a make-your-own taco bar, and a variety of beer from San Diego's Green Flash Brewery will be featured at the Kings Art Center, 605 N. Douty St., Hanford. Tickets are $25. For information, visit kingsartcenter.org.

May 2 – Bark for Life – 9am-1pm
American Cancer Society Bark for Life will be held at Exeter Bark Park (F and Palm streets). This is a fundraising relay event. For information, visit relayforlife.org/exeterca.

May 2 – Thursday Night Market Place – 5:30-9pm
To kick-off the Hanford Thursday Night Market Place season, Poor Man's Poison will be the featured entertainment. Fresh produce, beer garden, live band, D.J., local vendors, kids activities and theme nights are featured every Thursday night May through September in downtown Hanford. For information, visit mainstreethanford.com.

May 3-4 – 25th Annual Tulare County Renaissance Faire
The Guild of St. Mortimer presents the 25th Annual Renaissance Faire at Plaza Park. Tickets, $10; children seniors and military (with ID) $7. For information, visit facebook.com/TCRF1.

May 3 – 14th Annual Car & Motorcycle Show – 9am-3pm
The Rollin' Relics Car Club of Porterville will present this show at Veterans Park, on the corner of Henderson and Newcomb in Porterville. Spectators admitted free. Pre-registration entry fee is $25. The show is open to all year models, with no restriction, as well as under construction vehicles. DJ Roy Macomber will spin the music at the Friday night Cruise Night and Saturday during the show. Trophy presentation and 50/50 raffle will close the show. Proceeds go towards area youth and community programs. For information, call 359-2761.

COMMUNITY

April

April 18 – PowerPoint 1 Class – 8:30am
Tulare Public Library will offer a computer class. To sign up, call 685-4503 or stop by the research and information desk.

April 20 – PFLAG Meeting – 3-5pm
PFLAG (Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays) will meet at Congregation B'Nai David, 1039 S. Chinowth St., Visalia. For information visit pflag-tulare-kings.org.

April 22 – Computer Class in Spanish Language – 8:45am
Tulare Public Library will introduce a new computer class on the first and third Tuesday of the month in Spanish. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

April 24 – 14th Annual Rodeo Blood Drive
Donors will receive a commemorative t-shirt featuring artwork by local artist David Dalgety, along with Clovis Rodeo discounts. The drive will be held at Visalia Donor Center, 1515 S. Mooney Blvd., Monday through Thursday from 8am-6:30pm; Friday 8am-6pm; and Saturday, 9am-1pm.

April 24 – Last Thursday Book Club – 6pm
The Tulare County Library Last Thursday Book Club will continue its discussion of "Scarlett," by Alexandra Ripley. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

April 24 – Veterans Aid and Attendance Benefits Workshop – 6-7:30pm
Gil Fleming, VA Accredited Attorney, will be the guest speaker of the workshop held at Quail Park Retirement Village, 4520 W. Cypress Ave., Visalia. For information, 624-3503.

April 24 – Visalia Philatelic Society Auction – 6:15pm
Visalia Philatelic Society will meet at the Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 S. Conyer St. Doors open at 6:15 for bidders to examine auction items. The meeting begins at 7pm with the auction starting at 7:30pm. A raffle is held during each auction. For information, call 686-5067 or 734-6353.

April 25 – PowerPoint 2 Class – 8:30am
Tulare Public Library will offer a computer class. To sign up, call 685-4503 or stop by the research and information desk.

April 26 – Woodlake Rotary Golf Tournament – 10am
Woodlake Rotary will hold its annual golf tournament fundraiser at Valley Oaks Golf Course. For information, call 627-6961.

April 26 – Veterans Aid and Attendance Benefits Workshop – 10-11:30am
Gil Fleming, VA Accredited Attorney, will be the guest speaker of the workshop held at Quail Park Retirement Village, 4520 W. Cypress Ave., Visalia. For information, 624-3503.

April 26 – The Sci/Fi Book Club – 1pm
"Echoes in Time," by Norton and Smith will be discussed. The Sci/Fi Book Club meets in the Tulare Public Library. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

April 26 – Valley Oak SPCA 23rd Annual Walk A Dog A Thon – 8am
Prizes will be given for the Top Dog Fundraiser in five categories. Participants raising at least $50 receive event T-shirt and tote bag. Other prizes also awarded. The event will be held at Plaza Park. For information, visit vospca.org.

April 26 – Drug Take Back – 10am-2pm
The Visalia Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will dispose of unwanted prescription drugs. Bring the pills to Police Department Headquarters at 303 S. Johnson St. For information, call 713-4216.

April 26 – EUHS Alumni Awards Banquet
The Alumni of the Year Award will be presented at the Exeter Union High School Annual Banquet. For information, call 592-2717.

April 26– Free Diabetes Expo and Kidney Education Program–9am-1:30pm
Kaweah Delta Outpatient Specialty Clinics and other local organizations, will host an educational program at Kaweah Delta Multiservice Center, 402 W. Acequia Ave., in Visalia. To attend, pre-register by calling 624-2520 or e-mail eromero@kdhcd.org.

April 27 – Exeter Kiwanis Club Easter Pancake Breakfast
The Kiwanis Club will host its annual Easter Pancake Breakfast prior to the Easter Egg Hunt at the Exeter Memorial Bldg. For information, call 592-2919.

April 30 – Adventures in Eating – 11:45am-12:45pm
Porterville College Cultural Historical Awareness Program will hold a multicultural buffet in the Porterville College Quad. For information, visit portervillecollege.edu/CHAP.

April 30 – The Knitting Club – 5:30pm
This club meets every-other Wednesday in the Olympic Room of the Tulare Public Library. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

May 8 – Tulare Kings Mensa – 5:30pm
Tulare Kings Mensa, the South Valley's high IQ society, will meet at Panera Bread (near Target), 4103 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, for coffee, bagels, sandwiches and conversation. Prospective members encouraged to attend. For more info, call 280-9774.

May 8 – Visalia Philatelic Society Auction – 6:15pm
Visalia Philatelic Society will meet at the Fellowship Hall of Grace Lutheran Church, 1111 S. Conyer St. For information, call 686-5067 or 734-6353.

May 10 – Just Walk - 8-9am
Visalia Parks and Recreation will host a walk with a doc program on the second Saturday each month through December at Riverway Sports Park, 3611 N. Dinuba Blvd.

May 10 – High Tea in the Garden – 12:30pm
Trinity Lutheran Church will hold High Tea in the Garden with an afternoon of fashion and entertainment. Tickets are $20, or $160 for a reserved table of 8. Call 592-4070 for information.

May 11 – Trinity Lutheran Church Tea – 12:30-3:30pm
Trinity Lutheran Church will be hosting its annual "Trinity Tea in the Garden." For information, call 592-4070.

May 14 – Exeter Woman's Club Meeting – 1:30am-1pm
EWC meets September through June on the second Tuesday of each month for lunch at 11:30am. For information, visit exeterwomansclub.com.

May 16 – First Heritage Association Scholarship
Porterville Fair Heritage Association will present the first Heritage Scholarship as the Junior Livestock Sale at the Porterville Fairgrounds. The Heritage Animal auction proceeds go toward youth related programs, exhibits and future projects at the Porterville Fairgrounds.

May 16 – United Way of Tulare County Mixer – 5-6:30pm
United Way of Tulare County and local chambers will hold a Business After Hours Mixer at 1601 E. Prosperity Ave., Tulare. Meet their new staff and enjoy food, drinks and door prizes. For information, call 685-1766.

Last year's Festival of Colors Run in Porterville.

Second Festival of Colors 5K Run/Walk during Iris Festival

On Saturday, April 26, Porterville will see its second Festival of Colors Run as a now-permanent component of the Iris Festival. This 5k run/walk/community event is scheduled to begin at 8:30am and will take place in conjunction with the 16th Annual Iris Festival. Held in the historic downtown district of Porterville and winding its way through the scenic Rails-to-Trails, this event is becoming a favorite of running enthusiasts and casual walkers alike.

This year's Festival of Colors Run is coordinated by Enspirit, Inc., in partnership with the Porterville Chamber of Commerce. Enspirit was formed recently by the members of last year's Leadership Porterville class as a non-profit organization dedicated to community improvement. Enspirit's motto is just three words: "Energize, enhance and enliven," and the Festival of Colors Run embodies all of those.

"The Festival of Colors Run is our main fundraiser and all of the net proceeds will be re-invested in Porterville through local business support and community improvement projects," said Jenna Salazar, president of the Enspirit board of directors. "Residents of Porterville will get to see their contributions being put to work throughout the community very soon."

Salazar said she is excited to bring the Festival of Colors Run back for its second year. "Events like this are very popular across the country and we are happy to offer this family-fun event here in Porterville. We love having an event in Porterville that encourages people to get out and move, and have a great time doing it.

"Once the run is over, we expect Festival of Colors Run participants to proudly walk through the Iris Festival showing off their fun colors and crazy outfits," she added. "Many groups of families, friends and co-workers are expected to join in the fun of this event and get a little crazy with their attire, adding to the upbeat atmosphere of the run."

Registration in this 5K walk/run event is $45 and is open to all ages. For more information or to register, visit www.portervillefestivalofcolorsrun.com

Iris

Continued from p. 17

be the fifth run of the Porterville Chili Cook-off where local businesses, families and friends form teams to take part in this friendly competition. The popular chili sampling starts at noon this year with sales of Chili Tasting cards beginning early in the morning. The entertainment stage will keep the music lively as the teams put their coveted recipes to the test.

The Porterville Chamber's 2014 Iris Festival Committee has partnered with the following entities to present another premier community and visitor event: Eagle Mountain Casino, Tule River Tribal Council, Tule River EDC, Sierra View District Hospital, Family HealthCare Network, TF Tire, ServiceMaster by Benevento, Golden Touch Limousine, KTIP Radio, *The Porterville Recorder* and K100. Vendor, business promotion and community information booths are available by calling the chamber at 784-7502.

The Iris Festival is expected to draw 20,000 residents.

ART

April

Through April 26 – Tulare Business Pride Mini Exhibit
The Tulare Historical Society and Museum will host a mini-exhibit in its audio-visual room. Tulare Business Pride showcases a selection of business memorabilia from some of Tulare's finest businesses. The museum, at 444 W. Tulare Ave., is open from 10am-4pm Thursday through Saturdays. Admission is $5 for adults. Student and senior discounts available. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Through April 26 – Baskets and Gourds: Containers of Our Culture
This Arts Visalia exhibit will show works by leading artists in the fields of basket weaving and gourd art. A reception will be held April 25 to kick off the weekend of the Containers of Our Culture Conference. For information, visit artsvisalia.org.

Through May 16 – Awakening Exhibit – 5:30-8:30pm
This exhibit at Provost & Pritchard, 130 N. Garden St., Visalia, will feature artwork by Betty Berk, Toni Best, Jeri Burzin, Laurie Gorman, Linda Hengst, Deborah Nolan, Deanna Saldana and Lynn Ramires.

Through May 17 – Kings Art Center Annual Spring Show
An annual open entry exhibit hosted by the Kings County Art League and the Kings Art Center will feature more than 60 works of art by members and non-members from the community. The display will be in the Marcellus Gallery. Gallery hours are Wednesday Through Friday from 11am to 4pm and weekends from noon to 3pm. For informa tion, visit kingsartcenter.org.

Through May 17 – Celebrate Pastels
Recent works by LaVone Stering, an award winning pastel artists from Visalia will be on display at the Members Gallery at the Kings Art Center in Hanford. The works exhibited are landscapes and portraits. Gallery hours are Wednesday through Friday from 11am to 4pm, and weekends from noon to 3pm. For information, visit kingsartcenter.org.

Through May 31 – Tulare Annual Spring Art Show
The Tulare Palette Club's Annual Spring Art Show will be held in the Tulare Historical Museum's Art Gallery. Dozens of artists will display their works in a variety of media including oil, acrylic, encaustic, watercolor, pastel, mixed media, pen, pencil and computer-generated art. For information, visit tularehistoricalmuseum.org.

Through June 30 – A Box of Chocolates
The Exeter Courthouse Gallery and Museum spring art exhibit brings together the work of George Tanimoto and Jerry Smith. The Gallery is located at 125 South B Street.

April 18-19 – Spring Wildflower Photography Workshop
Mike's Quality Cameras will offer a photography workshop featuring secrets of successful lighting with Pam Coz-Hill on April 18 from 7-9pm and April 19 from 8am-3pm. For information, visit mikesqualitycamera.com.

April 18-20 – Open Air Peddler's Market
The market featuring antiques and collectibles is held at Tumbleweeds Antiques, 159 North B Street, Exeter, and at Exeter Treasures, 558 E. Palm. To reserve space or for information, call 592-1940 or 936-1487.

April 21 – Taste the Arts Poster Contest Deadline
Arts Consortium is seeking entrees to its poster contest for Taste the Arts 2014, taking place October 11 in downtown Visalia. The selected design may be reproduced on posters, t-shirts and other promotional items that will support the festival. For information, visit artsconsortium.org.

April 25 – Baskets and Gourds Reception – 6-8pm
A meet-and-greet reception will be held at Arts of Visalia. Teachers across the country as well as local artists will offer art classes on baskets and gourds at the Visalia Elks Lodge April 26 and 27. For conference information, visit calgourds.com/events.

April 26-27 – Exeter Courthouse Gallery of the Arts and Museum – 10am-4pm
Exeter Courthouse Gallery of the Arts and Museum is open every weekend. The gallery is located at 125 South B Street.

April 26-27 – Baskets and Gourds: Containers of Our Culture
Visalia Elks Lodge will host a Basketry Gourd Conference. Over 20 teachers from across the country will teach classes. For conference information, visit calgourds.com/events.

THEATER

April

April 17 – Laughter's Good - Rodney Carrington – 7:30pm
Tachi Palace will present comedian Rodney Carrington. Bingo Hall Doors open at 6pm. Mature audience only. Tickets are $45, $55, $85. For information, visit tachipalace.com.

April 17 – Short Term 12 – 7:30pm
Stella Artois Independent Film Series & The Visalia Fox Theatre present "Short Term 12" at the Visalia Fox. For information, visit foxvisalia.com.

May

May 1-4, 9-11 and 16-18 – Nobody's Perfect
Encore Theatre Company presents "Nobody's Perfect" at the Encore Theatre, 324 South N Street, Tulare. Advance tickets available. For more information, visit tulareencoretheatre.org or call 686-1300.

May 15 – Cutie and The Boxer – 7:30pm
Stella Artois Independent Film Series & The Visalia Fox Theatre present "Cutie and the Boxer." Tickets, $6-$8, are available at the box office or foxvisalia.com.

See more events online
ourvalleyvoice.com

Hanford and Tulare will host the 2014 Western Classic Sprint Car series. Pictured above: Ryan Bernal in his car.

Western Classic Sprints to be Held in Hanford, Tulare

Kings Speedway in Hanford will host the next round in the 2014 USAC Western Classic Sprint Car Series, slated for April 25 on its 3/8-mile dirt track. The series continues the next night, April 26, at the one-third mile dirt Thunderbowl Raceway in Tulare.

Geoff Ensign emerged with a five-point lead in the most recent series standings. Ensign finished second at Calistoga Speedway, then backed it up with another second the following night at the same track.

AMSOIL USAC/CRA Sprint Car regular Nic Faas of Huntington Beach grabbed the 20-lapper at Calistoga. He took the lead at the start and led all 20 laps in the Keith Ford Berry Pack/King Racing Products Spike/Nogrady to beat Ensign, Ryan Bernal, Richard Vander Weerd and Marty Hawkins. Driver Bradley Terrell was transported to a local hospital after suffering a broken leg during a heat race crash.

Defending USAC Western Classic Sprint Champion Ryan Bernal of Hollister won the 20-lap feature at Calistoga the following day, wheeling the Mike Phulps Core Power/DMI Race Products ART/S & S. He passed Trevor Schmid on lap three and led the rest of the way to beat Ensign, Richard Vander Weerd, Landon Hurst and Jace Vander Weerd.

2014 USAC Western Classic Sprint Car Standings: 1-Geoff Ensign-130, 2-Ryan Bernal-125, 3-Richard Vander Weerd-115, 4-Nic Faas-113, 5-Trevor Schmid-102, 6-Matt Mitchell-92, 7-Marty Hawkins-92, 8-Landon Hurst-89, 9-Jace Vander Weerd-84, 10-Terry Schank Jr.-84.

KIDS CALENDAR

April 19 – Kids Activities – 1-2pm
Kids' Activities take place every Saturday in the Olympic Room of the Tulare Public Library. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

April 19 – Easter Egg Hunt and Earth Day Event – 8-11:30am
Sunset Waste System and the City of Exeter will host its annual Easter Egg Hunt at Exeter City Park. The hunt is open to all children, ages up to 10 years, and begins at 9 am.

April 19 – A Very Hungry Caterpillar Stories and Crafts – 1-3pm
Tulare Public Library will host a reading by Flora Johnson of Grandma's House at the "Very Hungry Caterpillar" in the Olympic Room. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

April 22 – YEA! Media Meet & Greet – 5:30-7:30pm
Visalia Chamber Young Entrepreneurs Academy hosts a meet and greet at the chamber office. For information, visit visaliachamber.org/pages/yea.

April 22 – Kindergarten Readiness Story-time – 6:15pm
Every Tuesday evening, Kindergarten Readiness Story-time is held at Tulare Public Library in the Kids' Space. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

April 22 – Porterville College FAFSA Workshop – 5-7pm
Porterville College will hold a free FAFSA workshop to assist students in completing their financial aid applications. Students should come prepared with the following information: email address, parent and student 2013 tax returns, W-2's, driver's license or State ID, spouse or parents' Social Security numbers and dates of births. For information, visit portervillecollege.edu.

April 22 – Homework Help
Homework help for children in grades K-12 is available in the Tulare Public Library Learning Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4-7pm and Saturdays from 1-4pm. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

April 25 – Family Game Night – 5pm
Family Game Night is the last Friday of the month in the Tulare Public Library, Olympic Room. For information, visit tularepubliclibrary.org.

Lunch In Fashion
Featuring Chelsea Street Boutique
The Southern Pacific Depot Restaurant
Come see the latest Spring Fashions
Fridays at noon. Make your reservation today!
207 East Oak Avenue, Visalia
(559) 732-8611 • www.depotvisalia.com

Trophies will be awarded in various categories, including engine, paint, upholstery, best of show, best custom and stock bike.

Rollin' Relics to Present Car & Motorcycle Show on May 3rd

The Rollin' Relics Car Club of Porterville will present its 14th Annual Car & Motorcycle Show on Saturday, May 3rd at Veterans Park in Porterville. Car show registration is from 8-10am, and the show runs from 9am to 3pm.

Local merchants will present custom plaques to the entry of their choice, between 10am-1pm. Mayor, police chief, CHP and veterans' picks will be awarded as "Special Trophies," to the car, motorcycle or pickup of choice at 1pm. Also included will be two memorial trophies honoring Leland Ware and Ron Pack. Trophies will be awarded to the cars or pickups in the following categories: engine, paint, upholstery, under construction, best of show, and best custom and stock bike.

Raffle prize tickets, crafts, food and drinks will be available for purchase all day long. Raffle drawings will be conducted throughout the day. The show is open to all year models, with no restrictions, as well as under construction vehicles. DJ Roy Macomber will spin the music at the Friday night Cruise Night and Saturday during the show. Trophy presentations and the 50/50 raffle will close the show.

Pre-registration fee is $25 and $30 on the day of the show, and includes event T-shirt and dash plaque. Entry forms are available at Sierra Street Rods, Designs by Dillon and various businesses around town. Pre-registration will also be conducted at the Pre-Show Cruise night on Friday, May 2nd, at the Pizza Factory at the corner of Porter Road and Henderson. Friday Cruise night starts at 5pm, with a show and shine, and ends whenever, with a drawing for the 50/50. There is no charge to attend either the Cruise Night or the Car and Motorcycle Show.

There is still craft vendor space available at $25 per vendor booth. In addition to traditional craft vendors, the event offers an opportunity for business and community organization marketing. There is one opening for a Mexican food vendor, shaved ice, root beer floats or most other food items, but vendors selling hamburgers and hotdogs have already reserved their spaces. Non-profit, information-only booths are available at no charge, as the Rollin Relics Car Club continues to promote community education. For more vendor information, call Dennis at 920-7087 or Don at 781-0726.

All proceeds from the show go towards area youth and community programs and activities. For more show information, call Rusty at 359-2761 or John at 784-8561.

Valley Oak SPCA 23rd Annual Walk-A-Dog-A-Thon
Join us Saturday, April 26 at Plaza Park as we walk to raise money and save lives!
It will be a fun-packed day featuring:
- 3-mile walk
- Vendors
- Canine Contests
- Raffle
- Fun For All Ages!

Entry Fee $25 Minimum Donation
You do not have to have a dog in order to participate.
Prizes will be given for the "Top Dog" Fundraiser in the following categories:
- Youth
- Teen
- Adult
- Senior
- Team (3 or more members)

- Participants raising at least $50 in donations will receive event t-shirt and tote bag.
- Teams raising at least $200 in donations will receive event t-shirt and tote bag for each team member.
- Participants/Teams raising $500 or more in donations will also receive event t-shirt, tote bag and a kennel plaque in their name at our shelter for one year.
- Ask your family, friends and co-workers to donate. Or form a team and get creative with themes or costumes! Event information: 713-4694.
- Registration begins 8:00am, walk begins 9:00am.

Valley Oak SPCA
Valley Oak SPCA, 29016 Hwy 99, Visalia, 651-1111
Spay/Neuter Clinic, 2622 E. Main St, Visalia, 741-1121
www.vospca.org | www.facebook.com/ValleyOaksSPCA
VS-000029140

Valley Oak SPCA to Host 23rd Annual Walk A Dog A Thon

On Saturday, April 26, at Plaza Park in Visalia, Valley Oak SPCA will host its 23rd Annual Walk A Dog A Thon. The event features a three-mile walk, blessing of the animals, vendors, raffle, canine contests and fun for all ages. Trainer Lori McCants will conduct AKC-sponsored Canine Good Citizen evaluations and certified testing.

The event will feature canine contests.

The entry fee is $25 (minimum donation) and prizes will be given for the "Top Dog" in the following categories: youth, teen, adult, senior and team (three or more members). Participants raising at least $50 in donations will receive an event t-shirt and tote bag. Teams raising at least $200 in donations will receive an event t-shirt and tote bag for each team member. Participants/teams raising $500 or more in donations will receive an event t-shirt, tote bag and a kennel plaque in their name at the SPCA shelter for one year.

Registration forms are available at Valley Oak SPCA Shelter or Clinic, and online at vospca.org or facebook.com/valleyoakspca. Registration will also be conducted on the day of the event. Registration starts at 8am; the walk starts at 9am. All dogs must be on leashes at all times, current on vaccinations and licensed. No puppies under one year of age, no overly aggressive dogs and no female dogs in heat. You do not have to have a dog to participate.

Valley Oak SPCA is looking for Tulare County's most talented canines for the Best Trick contest. Owners and their canine companions can also participate in the Happiest Wag, Best Owner and Dog Look-Alike, Musical Squares, and Bobbing for Biscuits (small and large dog divisions) contests.

Valley Oak SPCA will have dogs available for adoption at the event. Canines looking for a family to call their own will be wagging their tails in hopes of finding a forever home and "new leash on life." You can have your pet microchipped for $35, pick up a Valley Oak SPCA volunteer application, or get information on the SPCA's Low Cost Spay Neuter Clinic, pet care and other pet services.

Valley Oak SPCA provides care, treatment and shelter to thousands of lost, stray, injured, abused, abandoned and unwanted animals each year. Valley Oak SPCA operates a clinic where thousands of dogs and cats are spayed and neutered each year. The SPCA works to adopt animals into new homes, finds rescue organizations to take some animals, and works to educate the community on the importance of spaying and neutering, as well as on being responsible pet owners.

'Legends of R&B' to Appear at Eagle Mountain Casino on April 25

"The Legends of R&B" – Rose Royce, Club Nouveau, Honey Cone and Midnight Star – will take the stage at Eagle Mountain Casino on April 25 for an 8 pm show.

Rose Royce

The Grammy Award-winning, multi-platinum-selling group Rose Royce is known for such hits as "Car Wash," "Wishing on a Star" and "I Wanna Get Next to You." Their songs have been covered or sampled by such artists as Beyonce, Seal and Mary J. Blige.

Honey Cone, a female trio from Los Angeles were called together as a back-up group for a Burt Bacharach sequence on the Andy Williams TV show. Their career was launched with 1971's "Want Ads." Their other chart hits include the #1 R&B hit "Stick-Up," "Girls It Ain't Easy" and "One Monkey Don't Stop No Show."

Club Nouveau released four consecutive hits of disco-flavored and funk tunes, "Jealousy," "Situation #9," a cover of Bill Withers' "Lean on Me" and "Why You Treat Me So Bad." Midnight Star had earned platinum and gold with dance floor hits like "Freak-A-Zoid," "No Parking on the Dance Floor," "Wet My Whistle" and "Slow Jam." Tickets ($45, $35) are available at www.eaglemtncasino.com or at the casino gift shop (800) 903-3353. Eagle Mountain Casino is a full-service casino and is owned and operated by the Tule River Tribe.

Mind Body Spirit Day Planned in Hanford

The Cosmic Corral in Hanford is putting on its 2nd Annual Mind Body Spirit Day on Sunday, April 27 from 10am to 6pm.

The first presentation will be by Francisco Alvarez on the "Sacred Aztec Calendar." Based on birthdate, much like western astrology, the Aztec calendar can provide insight into your personality, purpose and destiny. At 11:30am, there will be a vibrational healing with Charissa Escalera, reiki master, who will discuss energy and vibrational healing and the effects on the body. At 12:30pm, Laura Doty will give a presentation about using "Infinite Love and Gratitude" to heal yourself. At 1:30pm, We Maidens Three, spiritual counselors, will talk about their investigative team that searches for irrefutable evidence of existence of the other side.

At 2:30pm, Darcy Bellows, author of Finding Vern, A True Life Ghost Story, and psychic medium Michelle Tedrow will discuss how our loved ones in spirit continue to be very much a part of our lives. Judith Campanaro, creativity coach, will follow at 3:30pm to give a lecture on how to create your way to self-discovery. She will teach attendees that by releasing our old, stored feelings, we relearn how to simply experience life unimpeded by past beliefs.

At 4:30pm, there will be a gallery reading by Michelle Goyette, psychic medium. At 5:30pm, "What is Divination?" with Crystal Ravenwolf, clairvoyant and tarot card specialist, will teach what divination is and the many different forms in which it can be done.

Presenters will be on hand all day for interactions, and there will be refreshments and door prizes. The Cosmic Corral is located at 209 N. Irwin St. in Hanford. For more information, call 772-8140.

2014 5K Festival of Colors Run

Main Street
Downtown
Porterville

PORTERVILLE IRIS Festival

Porterville Chili Cook-Off

Free Admission

Saturday, April 26th • 9 am - 5 pm

Featuring 175 Food, Craft, Arts, Commercial Booths
Porterville Chili Cook-off
Kids Zone with Amusements & More
Festival of Colors 5K Run/Walk
Three Musical & Dance Entertainment Stages
Salute to the Military Displays
Antiques & Collectibles Peddlers' Corner

INFORMATION - 559-784-7502 • PRESENTED BY THE PORTERVILLE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

Eagle Mountain Casino
Tule River Reservation 1873
Sierra View District Hospital
Family HealthCare Network

Harmony

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the 30,000-member International Barbershop Harmony Society and sings a wide range of songs, from Vaudeville hits to great Broadway show tunes. Its chorus and quartets perform at various community events, such as the Tulare County Symphony's Pops in the Park, the Kings and Tulare county fairs, the Kingsburg Band Concerts and the Springville and Tulare summer concert series, along with performances for the Downtown Visalians, Hanford's Main Street, and Christmas caroling for senior centers all over Central California.

For future performances (including for your event), contact Lee Smith in Visalia at 733-4211 or smith6388@sbcglobal.net.